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Stories and Storytelling in the "Libro De Buen Amor": Juan Ruiz's Use of Folktales to Admonish, Persuade and Deceive (Spain).

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STORIES AND STORYTELLING IN THE LIBRO DE BUEN AMOR

JUAN RUIZ'S USE OF FOLKTALES TO ADMONISH, PERSUADE AND DECEIVE

A Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

The Libro de buen amor, a fourteenth century Spanish text by Juan Ruiz, is an extensive and complex poem rich in partially hidden messages. Thirty-five popular medieval tales form an integral part of the body of the work, and convey important information to the reader through the text of the tales and through the storytelling context created by the author.

Scholars have studied the tales most often from an historical perspective, and analyzed them separately from the central narrative; or have studied the textual materials with little emphasis on the function of the tales. Although such studies provide valuable information, they do not deal with the interpretation of the folktales in relation to the work as a whole. Significant information that is embedded in the context of the storytelling event created within the literary work may be overlooked by approaches which examine only textual materials.

This analysis of the tales uses criteria suggested by folklorists' studies of observable folklore as a means of discovering the complex relationship of the tales to the literary work and their contribution to the Libro de buen amor. The messages communicated through the text and context of folktales are often ambiguous or even contradictory, but examination of the

tales using folklore techniques reveals that they are closely related to each other and to the archpriest's story.

One fundamental concern expressed in the Libro de buen amor is the many forms of deceit which prevail in situations dealing with love. On one hand, Juan Ruiz uses the wisdom in folktales to suggest prudent measures that one should take to avoid being a victim of deceit. On the other, he illustrates in his description of the storytelling contexts how the same tales can be used by clever storytellers to deceive. The inherent ambiguity of folktales is the characteristic which enables the storyteller to manipulate audience response to achieve the desired end.

INTRODUCTION

The wide range of interpretative studies which have been published on the Libro de buen amor, a fourteenth century text by Juan Ruiz, Arcipreste de Hita, are indicative of the complexity of the work and the difficulties involved in its analysis. One problem encountered in such studies is that the work is difficult to classify in terms of genre and content. Juan Ruiz develops the work around the frame story of the autobiography of an archpriest, but he also includes a sermon developed in traditional medieval style, lyric poetry to the Virgin, the allegorical representation of Don Amor and Doña Cuaresma, and a number of traditional folk narratives as well. A second problem is that the relationship of these diverse elements to the work as a whole is complex. In the case of the folktales, previous studies either consider the tales separately, and view them from a primarily historical perspective outside the text of the Libro de buen amor; or they regard the tales as little more than incidental appendages to the literary work, and analyze the Libro de buen amor without attempting to discover any deeper connection between tales and literary text.

The folktales used by Juan Ruiz are much more than popular stories incorporated simply to ornament the literary text. Drawing from a large body of medieval folklore, he chose folktales which convey important information to the reader through both

their text and the context in which he uses them. The purpose of this study is to show how the folktales relate to the Libro de buen amor and the fictive autobiography of the archpriest. The first step is to identify the various contexts in which Juan Ruiz presents the tales. Then, drawing from historical data about the tales and the Libro de buen amor, the second step is to interpret the information conveyed through folktales and storytelling.

Juan Ruiz opens his work with a prayer in verse in which he recalls various examples of God's mercy and intervention on behalf of people, then asks for the Virgin's blessing. He follows this prayer with a sermon in prose dealing with understanding, will and memory. While expounding the need for instruction and understanding in order to act wisely, the author introduces the ideas of buen amor and loco amor. All people should choose to seek buen amor, which is of God, and spurn loco amor, the love of this world. But he assures his readers that regardless of their choice, they will find guidance in his text. Juan Ruiz closes the sermon with a prayer in verse that, like the first prayer, is addressed to God in the opening lines, but to the Virgin in the final stanzas. Two lyric poems to the Virgin follow. They are parallel in structure, each dealing with the seven joys of Mary.

The poet begins the next section by citing Cato and stating that everyone needs a little pleasure along with the trials of life. He then tells the popular tale of the Greek and the Roman who debate in sign language in order to resolve a conflict between the two nations. Juan Ruiz refers to the tale as an example of

the problem of interpreting signs correctly, and warns the reader to look beyond what is stated in his book to what he intends that the reader understand. Naming Aristotle as his source, he next discusses the nature of all living beings, both animal and human, and their need for love.

At this point, Juan Ruiz relates the preliminary events in the fictive autobiography of an archpriest, beginning with the archpriest's unsuccessful attempt to win the love of a dueña by sending his messenger to her. The archpriest says that she refused his offers, and relates the two fables that comprised her response to his messenger. With a reference to Solomon and the vanity of the things of this world, he comments briefly on the idea of the necessity of love. The archpriest then decides to send a friend to procure a woman named Cruz, but is doublecrossed by the messenger, who wins her for himself. The play on words inherent in the name "Cruz" in this context adds to the ambiguity of Juan Ruiz's statements about buen amor versus loco amor.

A discussion of the relationship of human nature to astrology, based on the authorities of Ptolemy and Plato, follows the Cruz episode. The archpriest tells his readers that since he was born under the sign of Venus, it is only natural that he should have a strong bent to love. He illustrates his point with a tale about astrologers and their predictions which shows that the stars indicate the course of human life, but he is careful to state that only God controls the events of the universe. The archpriest ends the discussion of astrology and human nature with

a description of how being in love affects people. Finally, he tells of his third unsuccessful attempt at love, when once again the woman he seeks to win turns him away.

The heart of Juan Ruiz's fictional autobiography of the archpriest begins with his encounter with Don Amor, the allegorical representation of love. After angrily greeting his visitor, the archpriest berates him for causing so much trouble for human beings in their daily affairs and for endangering their very souls. He develops his denunciation of Don Amor within the frame of the seven deadly sins, and upbraids Love for leading people to commit them. Each of the sins is illustrated with a tale. Don Amor has no opportunity to respond until the archpriest completes his arguments. He then calmly suggests that the archpriest has not taken the time to learn the art of love properly, and that he will certainly help him if the archpriest will follow his instructions. Don Amor cleverly twists the point of the very same arguments that have been used against him by telling folktales that have interpretations similar to the ones used earlier by the archpriest. Love convinces the frustrated archpriest to try again to win the love of a dueña, but this time with his guidance. Soon after their encounter, the archpriest meets Don Amor's wife, Doña Venus, to receive further instruction in the art of love. Putting their advice into practice, he attempts to win Endrina by retaining the services of a procuress, Trotaconventos. The ensuing episode tells how the go-between lures Endrina into an affair with her employer. Several times the

women use folktales as one method of communicating with each other. Trotaconventos ultimately succeeds in convincing Endrina to visit her house, and arranges for the archpriest to come while she is there. The archpriest closes this story with a warning to women to beware the wiles of old women like Trotaconventos. He then tells of his own problems with the go-between when he must make amends for insulting her.

Since the Apostle said that people should try all things, the archpriest determines to take a journey. On his way in the mountains he meets the serranas, but finds the rustic women less intriguing in reality than in imagination. Instead of beautiful shepherdesses who respond to him with refined grace and coyness, he sees rugged women driven by greed and instinct rather than by love. Relieved to be free of the serranas, he stops on his way down from the mountains to pay homage at a shrine to Mary. Two lyric poems on the passion of Christ complete this section.

Lent is drawing near, so the archpriest makes his way back home to celebrate the holy days. While entertaining Don Jueves Lardero prior to the beginning of the Lenten season, he receives two letters from Doña Cuaresma. She accuses Don Carnal of running rampant over her lands for the past year, and challenges him to battle within the week. One letter publicly announces her intentions, and the other is the formal challenge to Don Carnal. A fierce battle between his army of meat and her army of fish ensues. Dulled by too much food and wine, the forces of Don Carnal succumb to those of Doña Cuaresma, and she takes Don Carnal

captive. Doña Cuaresma forces him to fast, and the friar who comes to confess Don Carnal assigns him the penance of eating one specific food a day for each of his sins, the seven deadly sins. Throughout Lent, Don Carnal remains a prisoner in Doña Cuaresma's camp, but on Palm Sunday he escapes and challenges her to another battle. His meats rally round him, but her fish have gone back to the sea. She dresses in rags and leaves in defeat. The reunion of Don Carnal, Don Amor and their followers becomes a joyous celebration of victory.

After Don Amor and Don Carnal depart, the archpriest returns to the matter of finding his own love. He sends his faithful go-between, Trotaconventos, to procure two women for him, but she does not succeed. At her suggestion, the archpriest decides to solicit the favors of Garoza, a nun for whom Trotaconventos worked before being employed by the archpriest. This long episode develops almost entirely within the frame of an exchange of tales between the two women. The archpriest and the nun reach an agreement, but his happiness is shortlived because of Garoza's death. In desperation he tells the go-between to seek a Moorish woman, but even that fails. Soon thereafter, Trotaconventos dies. The archpriest bitterly laments his loss and denounces Death.

Returning to a more philosophical mood, the archpriest speaks of the Christian's arms against the devil, the world, and the flesh. He gives a brief discourse on the properties of little things, with particular attention to the virtues of little women. The autobiography ends with a brief episode about the archpriest's

second attempt to send a young man, Don Furón, as his go-between. This attempt also fails and Juan Ruiz concludes his work with a series of poems and prayers. These closing sections of the work parallel the preliminary pieces in many respects. The poet speaks once again about how to interpret the work, then writes two more lyric poems on the joys of the Virgin. He concludes with a series of cantigas, including the incomplete tale known as the "Cantiga de los clérigos de Talavera."

The variety of material in the Libro de buen amor, and the complex relationship of each section of the work to the work as a whole makes it difficult to establish a single set of interpretative criteria. The first comprehensive investigation of the Libro de buen amor, published in 1938 by Felix Lecoy, remains a basic reference for all studies of the work. Lecoy's detailed analysis deals with many aspects of the text, beginning with a careful description of the three extant manuscripts and their relationship to each other. He argues that the differences in the manuscripts reflect the fact that there were two distinct versions of the Libro de buen amor. Most of Lecoy's study is devoted to a discussion of the sources and analogues of different portions of the work. He investigates each of the principal episodes as well as each of the popular tales. Except for relatively minor details, Lecoy feels that the primary influences for the Libro de buen amor are found in the medieval European tradition.[1]

In addition to providing the groundwork for all serious scholarship, Lecoy's work has given shape to subsequent

discussions of several important points of criticism. His judgment that Juan Ruiz's sources were Western, for example, has been challenged frequently. Américo Castro contends that Juan Ruiz was the product of a society deeply influenced by the coexistence of two distinct cultures. He argues that much of the Libro de buen amor is inspired by Arabic sources, particularly The Dove's Neck-Ring.[2] María Rosa Lida de Malkiel agrees in part with Castro, but emphasizes the possibility of Hebraic influences as well. According to her, the book incorporates elements from both Christian European sources and Semitic Spanish sources. She refers specifically to the structural similarity between the Libro de buen amor and the maqāmat, The Book of Delights.[3] Other scholars have either challenged these theories or added information in support of them, but the main lines of the argument have changed very little.

One of the most vigorous debates concerns the intent of the Libro de buen amor. In Lecoy's estimation, the work is a treatise on the art of love which is meant to entertain. Anthony Zahareas supports this view and says that it is "a miscellany disposed chiefly toward secular notions" and incorporated into an autobiographical frame.[4] He focuses on the irony of Juan Ruiz, citing the tale of the Greeks and the Romans as the key passage in his interpretation of the text. Through the use of ambiguity and the destruction of didactic precision in the moral comments of the Libro de buen amor, Zahareas suggests that the poet opens the way to irony. He says one thing and implies another.[5] Another

supporter of this view is Otis Green, who stresses the idea of parody. He states, "Juan Ruiz's Libro de Buen Amor is, if I interpret it aright, primarily a manifestation of medieval laughter and joy." In reference to episodes in the work like the section on the canonical hours, Green says, "This is to fly in the face, not only of the Church's doctrine of virginity and celibacy, but also of the courtly tradition which made "pure" love extramarital and exempt from parenthood."[6] Alan Deyermond concludes his article on parody and the Libro de buen amor by saying that "parody is to Juan Ruiz not merely a convenient device, but a way of looking at the world..." He feels that this parodic view is the cause of the "ambiguity and shifting planes of reality that have sometimes been attributed to Arabic or Hebrew influence."[7]

On the other side of this issue, a number of critics believe that the work is didactic. The early studies of José Amador de los Ríos and Leo Spitzer support the point of view that Juan Ruiz relates sinful episodes from the life of the archpriest as examples to others of how not to live.[8] Lida de Malkiel agrees that although the Libro de buen amor is a pleasant and entertaining work, its intent is to edify the reader. She thinks that the structure of the book, parallel to that of the Semitic maqāmat, is further indication of its didactic nature, and notes the medieval practice of using stories to illustrate wrong behavior.[9]

Critics share a preoccupation with the contradictory messages in the Libro de buen amor. The meaning of buen amor itself is a difficult puzzle; and Juan Ruiz seems to vacillate deliberately between two approaches to love and life, that of the sinner who seeks worldly love, and that of the righteous person who seeks the love of God. Numerous scholars have devoted studies to the analysis of the work's unity, often in an effort to resolve these ambiguities. Raymond Willis contends that the problem has to do with the different versions of the manuscript. Although they are not unrelated to the theme of the text, Willis feels that the interpolated sections of the later redaction occur out of context and disrupt the narrative. In his estimation, the fact that Juan Ruiz added the episodes in his revision of the work reflects his changing attitude toward it, and suggests that at that time the poet leaned more toward its potential for entertainment.[10]

Other studies focus on the structure of the work or its episodes as a means of defining the work's theme. In his discussion of the book's form, Oliver T. Myers begins with the assumption that the aim of the work is didactic and that its theme is "the variety of love." He argues that his analysis of the structure confirms the didactic message while resolving the apparent contradictions in Juan Ruiz's tale. He states:

> The didactic message of Part I is that love is inseparable from life and stems unavoidably from our very existence. Part II teaches that love leads inevitably to death, and that there is no hope of lasting love on earth except the love of God.[11]

Viewed in this manner, the conflicting attitudes are a reflection of life itself. Myers describes the structure of the text as having an ascending and descending side, each roughly parallel to the other.[12] Colbert Nepaulsingh suggests that this schematic analysis is too simple to reflect the play of contrary ideas in the Libro de buen amor. He proposes that at each juxtaposition of opposites, the direction of the narrative changes, producing a zig-zag diagram of the structure.[13]

Nicolás Alvarez' structuralist analysis of the preface leads him to conclude that the internal structure of that part of the work is "ternaria, circular y moralizante, cuya ideología descansa en una concepción filosófica dualista." This dualism reflects the dual nature of human beings and the dual nature of the work.

> El Arcipreste dejó constancia en el prefacio de que en su poema coexisten dos planos antitéticos, el del loco y el del buen amor, y...escribió la obra teniendo muy en cuenta esto y con la finalidad expresa de encarecer el buen amor de Dios.[14]

In a later article, Alvarez discusses the characteristics of the epilogue, and concludes that "se destacan tres rasgos primordiales: la intención didáctico-moral, el arte poético y la unidad de la obra." He believes that the epilogue confirms the unity of the work as a whole, and notes the parallelism between it and the prologue.[15] Stanford Bergstrom also deals with the individual parts of the work as indicators of the intent of the whole. Within each section, according to Bergstrom, Juan Ruiz juxtaposes the concepts of holy love and lustful love. He

determines that "each section of the Libro presents a discrete delineation of the duality of love." In his final remarks, Bergstrom concludes:

> By juxtaposing the isolated portrayals of the amorous dialectic, one sees the basic theme of the duality of love expressed in a series of distinct patterns in the Libro, as in a work of visual art. These variations of thematic design give unity in multiplicity to the structure of the Libro de buen amor.[16]

James Burke finds the structural basis of the work in a series of linguistic associations based on an annominatio. By utilizing the same unit of sounds throughout the text, Juan Ruiz weaves a complex and intertwined pattern of words which suggest an underlying message. In this manner he creates a work in which two interpretations are present. The meaning which each reader extracts from the text "will be basically a reflection of his own mind and attitudes, his own way of reasoning and viewing the work. Juan Ruiz assumes a position of rhetorical neutrality..."[17] In an article summarizing some studies of the structure of the Libro de buen amor Philip Gericke cautions that most of these are based on unproven assumptions about the work and its two redactions. He identifies three approaches to the work, thematic, schematic, and dialectic, but feels that none of them has produced a definitive analysis of the structure of the text.[18]

Rather than describe the structural relationships of different parts of the text to each other, some scholars base their investigations on different aspects of the work.

Nepaulsingh, for example, suggests that an understanding of the personality of the autobiographical narrator is essential to the analysis of the Libro de buen amor. In the article mentioned earlier, he describes this narrator as a sinner who in fact represents the devil. He states:

> When the Archpriest inserts himself in the role of the devil he acts as an exemplary christian...the Archpriest satirizes not only the wrongs of society as a whole, but especially those of his own peer group—archpriests; and finally he makes his audience laugh with comic relief at the ridiculous excesses of his own diabolic performance.[19]

In his study of the relationship of the narrator to the structure of the Libro de buen amor, Humberto López Morales comments that the role of the narrator is to make the events of the text accessible to the reader. There are many narrators in the work, either narrator-agents who are dramatized participants in the events, or narrator-observers. He notes that the structure of the narrator in the Libro de buen amor is very complex, often functioning on several levels within a single episode. The different points of view conveyed by the multiple narrators are critical to the interpretation of the work, since the author communicates multiple messages through these agents.[20]

Other scholars have explored Juan Ruiz's understanding and manipulation of the written literary medium. In a recent article, Alan Deyermond deals with the question of Juan Ruiz's attitude to literature. He states that the numerous terms in the Libro de buen amor which refer to genre indicate an intense interest in the

creation, types and effects of literature. Although he does not propose a definitive interpretation of the work, Deyermond states, "There is ample evidence to support a serious reading of Juan Ruiz's literary manifesto." He suggests that if the lyrics mentioned by the poet were indeed part of the manuscript at one time, then it is possible that the poet intended to foster the development of the Castilian lyric.[21] Priscilla Meléndez examines the possibility of a theory of writing within Juan Ruiz's text. With regard to writing she states:

> La escritura, teniendo como elemento fundamental el lenguaje, se hace ambigua, surgiendo y planteándose así la problemática de la intención y el conflicto entre un propósito primario del escritor y el resultado final encarnado o expresado en el texto mismo.[22]

Noting the contrast between Juan Ruiz and Juan Manuel, she discusses the concept of two types of texts—one open and one closed. Whereas Juan Ruiz recognizes the inevitable ambiguity of the text and acknowledges the possibility of multiple interpretations, Juan Manuel defines and limits the interpretation of his writing. She concludes: "Podemos decir, entonces, que el Libro de Buen Amor es, en su totalidad, el resultado de preocupaciones que abarcan aspectos fundamentales del proceso creativo..."[23]

Marina Scordilis Brownlee also bases her interpretation on Juan Ruiz's attitude to the text, but from the reader's point of view. She states that "the Libro is profoundly concerned with the

problem of interpretation, that it in fact thematizes the problem of interpretation, functioning as a logical extension of Augustinian hermeneutics."[24] Rather than present reading as a means to salvation, as in Augustine's Confessions, Juan Ruiz indicates serious doubts about the didactic potential of exemplary literature. The archpriest's story does not offer a model for salvation, but mirrors the human condition. Brownlee concludes that "while imitative literature presupposes that its readers will be ultimately illuminated by its didacticism, the ending of the Libro explicitly acknowledges that it can, and (of necessity) will, be read according to a multiplicity of interpretations."[25] Looking specifically at the type of reader for whom Juan Ruiz wrote, Jeremy Lawrance contends that "the fundamental inspiration behind his poem is bookish." He argues that the work was not composed for a popular audience, but that it reflects the scholastic aspects of medieval thought and language. Much of the meaning inherent in the structure of the work is lost if the reader analyzes it according to modern concepts of logic. In Lawrance's view, the learned medieval audience would have understood and delighted in Juan Ruiz's clever uses of logical arguments to prove an absurd point.[26]

Another approach to the interpretation of the work is the examination of the relationship of the Libro de buen amor to certain aspects of medieval society. One of the most important conflicts of the period was the division in the church over the question of celibacy. Two recent articles deal with Juan Ruiz's

attitude to the problem and its effect on the development of the text. Zahareas contends that the poet's concern with this issue demands that the poem "should be the object of both textual and historical analysis." Any interpretation requires that the critic understand the reasons for the apparent contradictions in the work. He proposes that these contradictions and Juan Ruiz's ironic point of view indicate that there were two audiences for the Libro de buen amor, one that could decipher the riddles, and one that could not.[27] With regard to the dilemma over celibacy he states:

> Juan Ruiz's text produced--and reflected--in its narrative structure, both sides of the controversy. the narrator faced the choice by dividing himself into two viewpoints: one view embraced the ideology of celibacy...The other view, offered in the name of nature, invoked against reformist rigour the impossibility of going against the physical makeup of men.[28]

Dorothy Clotelle Clarke acknowledges the pervading nature of Juan Ruiz's attitude to the conflict over celibacy, and deals specifically with the episode of the archpriest's vision in light of the issue. She suggests that even the device of the vision is a possible parody in support of the poet's arguments against the Church's position.[29]

Certainly this brief overview can only highlight the important studies done to date, and suggest some of the trends in scholarship, particularly in the area of interpretation of the text. One of the most perplexing problems with which critics

grapple is that the conclusions of interpretive studies often do not apply equally well to all sections of the work. Several factors influence the reader simultaneously and each must be taken into account in the analysis of the work. This complexity of text makes the Libro de buen amor seem disjointed, although many critics have argued convincingly for an underlying unity.

Beginning with Lecoy's monumental work, the Libro de buen amor has been studied carefully from many points of view. Historical and biographical background provide information that contributes to an understanding of the issues which may have prompted its creation. The studies by Zahareas and Clarke address one such issue that is of primary importance, the question of celibacy. Other works, such as the studies by Lida de Malkiel, Castro, and Zahareas, present additional historical data that help to locate the Libro de buen amor in the literary tradition of medieval Spain, and to determine Juan Ruiz's indebtedness to that tradition as well as his deviation from it. Structural analyses of the Libro de buen amor like those of Myers, Nepaulsingh and Alvarez help develop a sense of the internal structure of the work and suggest a basis for its unity. The other studies reviewed in this introduction have been included primarily because they deal with matters of narration, audience, and audience response. They provide information which helps determine the responses that the work elicits from its audience, be it a learned or popular audience, contemporary or medieval. This information is important

to the analysis of the tales and their context in the Libro de buen amor.

The Libro de buen amor is both an important medieval text and a literary work which is a rich source of medieval folklore (albeit in literary form). Evidence in the Libro de buen amor indicates that Juan Ruiz observed and understood the function of the folktale in his own society, and that he was both participant and observer in the storytelling event. The traditional folk narratives included by Juan Ruiz are numerous enough and constitute a large enough portion of the entire work that they must be regarded as an important aspect of the whole. The tales in the Libro de buen amor have been the subject of several scholarly studies, with primary emphasis on the historical background of the tales and Juan Ruiz's sources. Felix Lecoy's Recherches sur le "Libro de buen amor" is the best example of this approach. A more recent study, a lengthy article by Ian Michael, clearly identifies the folkloric elements of the tales and acknowledges their popular source.[30] Some scholars, recognizing the large number of stories in the Libro de buen amor, have suggested various possible functions which they serve. Zahareas, for example, points out the irony of Juan Ruiz's ambiguous or paradoxical use of exempla which normally had a didactic intent.[31] Lida de Malkiel's view of the tales reflects her interpretation of the work as a whole. She states that the tales and fables "would be jarring appendages if they were divorced from the general didactic intent of the work."[32] However, scholars usually

relegate the tales to a secondary role within the narrative, whether they perceive them to be didactic or entertaining. Ian Michael states: "With Juan Ruiz popular tales are accessory only; they are always subordinated to his main purpose."[33] In the prologue to his critical edition of the work, Corominas discusses his belief that the tales were pieces that Juan Ruiz had written prior to the composition of the Libro de buen amor and simply wished to incorporate later.[34]

Although many praise Juan Ruiz's ability as a storyteller, none has dealt with the stories as an integral part of the literary work. Each tale used in the Libro de buen amor is told in a particular storytelling context created by the narrative. As López Morales points out, there are many narrators in addition to the poet-author, Juan Ruiz. Most of these narrators are also storytellers. For example, The protagonist of the autobiography, the archpriest, uses stories extensively, both as part of the narrated events of his life, and in his comments to the reader. Additional narrators are characters in the autobiography who do not address the reader, but only other characters. Since context and the narrator of each tale are significant features of both the folktale and the literary work, it is essential to identify and analyze them in determining the relationship of the tales to the rest of the text.

In addition, this study must take into account the medieval society in which the tales were commonly used, and what we know about folktales in that society. An important aspect of the

interpretation of the tales used in the Libro de buen amor is audience response. There are several audiences to be considered in the study of the Libro de buen amor. Within the work, Juan Ruiz creates fictive audiences and indicates their responses to various stories. The work itself was addressed to medieval audiences which would respond to the folktales and the Libro de buen amor according to knowledge and traditions that they brought to the text. Studies dealing with the audiences of Juan Ruiz's work indicate that there is not a clear-cut definition of any single medieval audience. I believe that there were in fact several potential audiences. Zahareas, Lawrance, Clarke and others argue convincingly for a learned, or at least astute audience that was aware of many facets of the controversy over celibacy. Such an audience could be expected to follow the intricate and sometimes contradictory logic of the text. But as Zahareas, Criado de Val, and others note, a second audience is also probable. Given the long history and popularity of both the folktales and other well-known episodes included in the Libro de buen amor, the work would have had a strong popular appeal simply as entertainment. In my opinion, these audiences are not mutually exclusive. The familiar folktales, and the human dilemma of understanding and coping with love make a good story. But the audience that brings more information to the reading of the text will react differently to its development.

It is not the purpose of this work to consider all aspects of the use of folk narrative in the Libro de buen amor, but rather to

analyze Juan Ruiz's use of the popular tales in a literary context. In order to define more clearly the criteria which will be used to analyze the tales, Chapter I surveys briefly the development of folklore methodology that is generally applied to observable folklore. Studies of observable folklore in context can serve as a vital basis for comparison when the context is created by an author in a literary text. The survey calls attention to the relationship of the development of literary criticism and folklore studies since both schools of thought provide valid and important tools for the study of the Libro de buen amor. Their similar and parallel history reflects the development of Libro de buen amor studies to this point and also gives background helpful for the understanding of the importance of folklore studies to the analysis of the work.

The Libro de buen amor is widely recognized as an important work in the development of medieval and early Renaissance literature. It plays a significant role in our understanding of the developments and changes in traditional folk narrative during the late Middle Ages and is indicative of the importance of folk narratives to medieval society as well. A number of recent publications indicate a growing awareness of and interest in the importance of folklore in the literature of the medieval period. Chapter II summarizes these aspects of the history of folklore, with particular attention to the important tale collections which circulated during the time. Such background information helps define the relationship of the Libro de buen amor to the popular

tale, and points out some important changes in the utilization of story which are evident in Juan Ruiz's treatment of the tales. This is followed by a closer look at the work published to this point which deals specifically with the folktales in the Libro de buen amor, noting the important contributions as well as the shortcomings of the approaches which have been employed.

Recognition of the folkloric aspects of the storytelling contexts created by Juan Ruiz in the Libro de buen amor, and the study of the relationship of narrators and audiences in these contexts, contributes to a more complete understanding of the work as a whole. Chapters III and IV analyze each of the tales in the Libro de buen amor with regard to the context in which they are used, the narrator and audience of each, and the possible responses that each tale elicits. The analysis of the tales is divided into two parts according to the specific context in which Juan Ruiz utilizes the tales, whether as part of a narrative passage or as part of the dialogue between characters. Characteristics of the stories and the storytelling contexts in each division point out the marked differences in the manner in which the tales are presented and utilized by Juan Ruiz. Still other differences are evident in the relationship of the tales to the various audiences of the Libro de buen amor. Three audiences can be clearly identified: the medieval audience addressed by Juan Ruiz, the fictive audience created by the narrative, and the reader of the Libro de buen amor. The author has chosen folktales with familiar interpretations that were widely accepted by

medieval audiences. However, the ideas which these interpretations convey may or may not coincide with those implied by the developments of the frame story. Thus a single tale may be used to relay multiple messages to the reader. One message lies in the interpretation generally associated with the tale, another in the manner in which the characters of the Libro de buen amor utilize the information conveyed in the tale. The narrative comments of the author himself sometimes introduce yet a third message. This complex interweaving of materials and levels of meaning is indicative of Juan Ruiz's understanding of the communicative power of folk narrative and its function in society.

Ambiguity or duality of meaning is a serious consideration in any study of Juan Ruiz's text. The human struggles portrayed in the Libro de buen amor, whether interpreted humorously or seriously, reflect the ambiguity inherent in human experience. Folktales often convey this same dual nature of mankind. Folklorists have observed that one method of dealing indirectly with the conflicts produced by human nature is through utilization of stories in which the protagonist achieves an acceptable resolution. The ambiguity of the conflict situation is not necessarily resolved, but the protagonist's actions suggest viable options to the listener. Deceit is an important factor in understanding the cause and resolution of human conflicts since it frequently precipitates both. This fact is reflected in folklore by the occurrence of deceit as a primary motif in folk narratives. Most of the tales of the Libro de buen amor are used to offer

possible solutions to conflict situations, and in most, deceit emerges as an important part of the message conveyed by both the text of the folk narratives and the greater text of the Libro de buen amor.

The Conclusion summarizes the manner in which Juan Ruiz takes advantage of these characteristics of folktales. Because folktales are inherently ambiguous, he is able to use them to communicate multiple points of view with regard to the human situation. Juan Ruiz uses the motif of deceit as it occurs in the folktales to warn against being deceived and at the same time to teach how to deceive. He also practices his own deception as both storyteller and creator of the storytelling context. Just as the folktales do not resolve the ambiguity that they portray, Juan Ruiz's text does not resolve the ambiguity that he presents. He identifies the conflict and the issues that influence it, suggests possible (and sometimes contradictory) courses of action, advocates prudence, and leaves the audience to determine its own resolution.

NOTES

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CHAPTER I

THE STUDY OF FOLKLORE IN LITERATURE

At the outset of a study of folklore in a literary work it is helpful to determine the relationship of folklore studies to literary criticism and identify some of the criteria for analyzing texts that folklorists and literary critics have in common. The comparatively high percentage of space which Juan Ruiz devotes to folktales is a fact which must be taken into account in a study of his work. This is not an exhaustive study of the Libro de buen amor, but an analysis of the folktales and the context in which they are told. Rather than analyze the tales and their relationship to the text of the Libro de buen amor from a strictly literary or historical perspective, this analysis takes the approach that these folktales must be studied with regard to their context. As many folklorists have noted, the relationships of folktales to their audience, the manner in which the storyteller relates the tales, and the circumstances of the storytelling all affect the messages that are communicated by the tales. Whether the text is collected in a live context or used by the author in a literary text, the context is vitally important. The following brief review describes some of the theoretical approaches to folklore which pertain to the relationship of folklore and context in general, and notes folklorists' views with regard to the analysis of folklore in literature.

Traditionally, literary critics directed most of their efforts to gathering as much historical and biographical information about a work and its author as possible. These efforts parallel the work of the historic-geographic school of folklorists, who were concerned with finding the earliest possible version of a folktale in question. Folklorists of this school conducted exhaustive searches for every available version of the tale, made detailed analyses of the characteristics of the tales to determine the history of a particular tale type, identified its oldest extant version, and postulated its original form.

In the early twentieth century, scholars reacted to this historical approach to criticism in both literature and folklore by proposing theories in which the focus of their studies changed from the factors which surround the text and its creation to the text itself. Of the many schools of thought that developed, structuralist criticism is one of the most important points of reference in comparing the development of literary and folklore studies. Structuralism had already caused significant changes in linguistic and literary theory before folklorists adopted its methodology. The work of a Russian folklorist, Vladimir Propp served as the catalyst for the change in folklore studies; however, Propp's significant work, Morphology of the Folktale, first published in 1928 in Russian, was not translated into English until 1958.[1] Primary structuralist studies in folklore appeared after the translation.

Other methods of criticism that evolved both before and after the development of structuralist methodologies are familiar to folklorists and literary critics alike. The methods that are of primary importance to this study are those which deal with the relationship of a text to the context in which it is presented. Such studies take into account the importance of the audience to the text, the idea that any text may generate multiple responses, and the identity and narrative technique of the narrator. In the study of medieval texts, sociological and historical information help to determine factors which may have influenced the author. Such information is also valuable for establishing a sense of what the impact of folktales would have been in the context of that historical period, and for comparing that to their impact in the literary text.

Folktales in literature may serve as models for a literary form, or they may appear as autonomous pieces incorporated into the body of a literary text. Initially, identifying categories of folktales that are found in a literary context is problematic. Folklorists have attempted to develop an accurate definition and workable method of classification for traditional folk narrative in live contexts since the time of the Grimm brothers. However, the fact that folk narratives vary greatly in structure and content and in their relative importance to the society in which they occur has made the task difficult to accomplish. Of the numerous categories of folk narrative that have been proposed, some of the most commonly used terms include "Marchen", "myth",

"legend", "fable", "animal fable", and "parable". The criteria used for differentiating among these types of narratives generally pertain to the level of belief implied in the narrative, the time and place of occurrence of narrated events, the attitude of the audience toward the narrated events, and the nature of the principal character of the tale.[2] For the purposes of this study, the term "folktale" will be used to designate any traditional narrative, whether recorded in prose or in verse.

The analysis of folktales or other folkloric elements in a literary text frequently begins with an historical approach, which attempts to locate the folk text within the literary tradition by identifying other sources which are analogous to the tale in question. Studies such as Bryan and Dempster's Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales or Garmonsway and Simpson's Beowulf and Its Analogues, for example, are important research aids for determining the historical sequence of certain changes or adaptations in the text of a tale used in literary works.[3] These studies are products of the method of analysis which was developed by scholars of the historic-geographic school. Although modern scholars criticize this method for its narrow focus, many well-known folklorists acknowledge the valuable contributions made by those who developed and used it. The historic-geographic school encouraged avid collecting of folklore and developed the framework necessary for compilation of the indexes of motifs and tale types. These reference tools alleviate a number of the basic problems in researching the history of specific folktales.

Francis Lee Utley, in his introduction to Max Luthi's Once Upon a Time: On the Nature of Fairy Tales, summarizes both the contributions of the historic-geographic school and the associated problems which prompted the development of newer methods.[4] One goal of the historic-geographic approach was to collect data that would discourage broad generalizations about the origin and development of folktales. As interest in collecting versions of folktales grew in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it became apparent that some means of organizing these materials was needed. Not only would some method of indexing aid in postulating the oldest possible version of a specific type of tale, which was the purpose of most collecting, but an index would also serve to catalogue this vast amount of information in such a way as to make it accessible to scholars throughout the western world. Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson compiled such an index of tale types, The Types of the Folktale.[5] Later, Stith Thompson developed a more complex index of individual motifs, Motif Index of Folk Literature.[6] The indexes produced by members of the historic-geographic school help not only to trace the origins and migrations of many tales, but also to prove that folktales both absorb and generate new material. Utley suggests that even though folklore scholars have adopted and continue to develop new approaches to the study of traditional narratives, the historic-geographic method will still be used as the most effective means of dealing with questions of historical development.

As noted earlier, structuralism, a movement which helped reshape theories of linguistics and literary criticism, affected the study of folklore in the 1960's. Inspired by Russian Formalist literary criticism, Vladimir Propp, a Russian folklorist, used structuralist methodology to study the folktale. Long before these views were incorporated into folklore theory in general, Propp published Morphology of the Folktale, in which he describes his method of structural analysis and applies it to a large group of Russian tales. Rather than concentrating on identification and classification of tales according to type, Propp's study focuses on the relationship of the individual units of action within a single tale to each other and to the tale as a whole. The basic unit is called the function, which Propp defines as an action performed by one of the tale's characters. Of the thirty-one possible functions identified by Propp, only one is essential to all tales, but the functions that do appear always occur in the same order. Propp's model has been used by many folklorists to study both individual tales and groups of tales from other cultures.

Some scholars have used fundamental ideas of structuralist theory as the basis for formulating methods of analysis somewhat different from Propp's. Alan Dundes describes two approaches in his introduction to the English translation of Propp's Morphology. He notes that Propp's study of specific units of action and the order in which they occur is a syntagmatic approach to the text, while Claude Levi-Strauss preferred to develop a paradigmatic

model.[7] Jonathan Culler defines Propp's approach as the study of the "possibilities of combination through which signs create larger units". Claude Levi-Strauss, on the other hand studied the "contrasts or oppositions between signs," and criticized the syntagmatic view.[8] Dundes suggests that the primary distinction between the two is Levi-Strauss' concern for the context of the tales and the role that context plays in determining the structure of the tale, and Propp's corresponding lack of concern.[9] This opposition is apparent in structuralist literary criticism as well.

Structuralist approaches have helped broaden the focus of critical and folklore studies. In his introductory remarks to Morphology of North American Indian Folktales, Alan Dundes discusses some of its advantages, and suggests that structuralist methodology is indispensable for textual analysis in folklore. However, while an historical approach does not provide a basis for the description of narrative forms or the analysis of the relationship of internal units which comprise a given narrative, a structuralists' morphological approach is useless in determining sources. On the other hand, Dundes notes that simultaneous study of similar tales can provide insight into the culture of the society that produced them.[10]

The thrust of Dundes' essay, "Structuralism and Folklore," is that both a comparative approach to folklore and a structuralist approach tend to take into account only the text of a folktale,

but it is possible to use the information gleaned from structural analysis to reach a better understanding of a culture:

> If we are successful in isolating and describing a structural pattern present in an item or genre of folklore, we may have provided a useful aid to understanding the nature of the culture at large as well as the cognitive categories, ideological commitments, and concrete behavior of the people sharing that culture.[11]

In comparing the different approaches to structural analysis taken by Propp and Levi-Strauss, Dundes notes that the latter's concern is with the structure of the world which myths describe rather than the structure of the text of the myths. It is the interpretation of the data relating to worldview which gives us insight into the culture which produces the narratives. Dundes' final argument is that this interpretation of data is a valid and even essential element of folklore studies:

> (W)e must go beyond the comparative listing of motifs and traits in different cultural areas. We must not stop with structural descriptions of Russian fairytales. We must make attempts to interpret the meanings (and I use the plural advisedly) of folklore. It is not enough to say that folklore is a mirror of a culture. We must try to see what it is that folklore reflects.[12]

Although it is impossible to discuss all of the methods of interpretation in both literary criticism and folklore study which have developed since the New Criticism and structuralism so radically changed the focus of these fields, there are several which are particularly important to this study of the Libro de

buen amor. While some scholars study narratives according to certain internal qualities of the text such as content or structure, others analyze a tale's function within a given setting and among a specific group of people.

In an article in which he addresses the issue of genre in folklore, Alan Dundes suggests that the criteria for defining genre cannot be taken from external features of the materials. He reviews efforts of various scholars to define particular genres and determines that no satisfactory solution has been found.[13] Dundes proposes that the internal features of folk material be analyzed with regard to the text, texture, and context. In the case of oral folklore, the texture would be the language of the text, and he notes that linguists have been most active in studying texture. According to Dundes, context is "the specific social situation in which that particular item is actually employed." He further states, "One reason for collecting context is that only if such data is provided can any serious attempt be made to explain WHY a particular text is used in a particular situation."[14] The pattern which emerges when a number of contexts have been collected indicates the function of the folk material. Dundes uses riddles to illustrate his point that context and text are often parallel in structure. He also notes that context may alter the form of the text. For example, the person transmitting the folktale may be influenced by the makeup of the audience or by its reactions and decide to change the wording or outcome of the

text. Thus, the identity of the narrator and the audience is a critical factor in the analysis of the context of folklore.[15]

The work of Linda Degh exemplifies folklorists' interest in sociological studies of the relationship of folklore to society. Her observations of the use of folktales in certain Hungarian communities reveal that the form of a tale is influenced by the context of the group which tells it and by the narrator's personality and technique. Degh begins with the premise that folktales are a social phenomenon whose form is determined by the purpose for which they are used. An important aspect of her research is her evaluation of the relationship of the storyteller to the group and the status of the storyteller in the society.[16]

Storytelling is an event which involves the participation not only of the storyteller but that of the listeners as well. Robert Georges proposes that the more recently developed theories of folklore are simply reworkings of old ones since they all are atomistic in their concentration on the text rather than the event of its telling. His concerns are not primarily the relationships of the storyteller to the community in general, but the specific relationships that develop between the storyteller and the listeners at a given storytelling event. He postulates that there is an important interaction between all those who participate in the storytelling, and that each person has responsibilities as well as rights. In his article, "Towards an Understanding of Storytelling Events", Georges observed that the story and the storytelling event are inseparable since the storyteller and the

participants communicate some of the messages to each other in non-linguistic ways. This interaction means that every storytelling event is unique.[17]

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett addresses a somewhat different aspect of the study of storytelling context in her essay "A Parable in Context: A Social Interactional Analysis of Storytelling Performance." She acknowledges that recent methodology has encouraged the recording of as much information as possible about the situation of a narration, but feels that the information is generalized and that very little attention is given to the immediate context and the details of how a specific narrator utilizes a specific tale. She further states that because folktales are preformulated:

> scholars have tended to view them as set pieces or autonomous entities and have recorded them most often in artificial interview contexts. Second, folklorists have concentrated on specialized storytelling events, that is, on speech events in which the focus is upon telling tales and narration is the dominant mode of discourse.[18]

She notes that in many instances the tale is not presented as a special piece, set apart from the dialogue, but is simply told in the course of conversation.

Folklorists recognize that tales, like shorter forms of oral folklore such as riddles or proverbs, are particularly useful in situations involving social conflict. Although certainly the storytelling event as a separate occasion is important to many groups, folktales also function as a powerful means of human

expression and communication on a more informal level. The traditional narrative in a conversational context can be an indirect method of addressing a problem and suggesting a possible solution to it, since the tale itself must present some sort of conflict which develops to its resolution.[19]

Roger Abrahams', in "Introductory Remarks Toward a Rhetorical Theory of Folklore" advocates an approach to folklore that is concerned with the artist, the work, the effect of the work on the audience, and the audience's effect on the work. According to his view the performer is a kind of mediator in a conflict situation reflected by the folkloric item. By presenting an imaginary and impersonal resolution of the conflict, the folklore makes a real resolution possible.[20] In another article Abrahams applies these ideas to shorter forms of verbal folklore such as proverbs and superstitions. He relates the use of these genres to the society in which they function as "control devices which arise in recurrent problem situations."[21] Although Abrahams deals specifically with shorter forms of folklore in observable societies, his ideas are more widely applicable, as is evident in his summary remarks:

> Folklore is a social phenomenon: it articulates the relationships between individuals as they group themselves institutionally; it allows a definition of group; it points out the places at which the members of the group habitually conflict with each other and represents techniques by which the conflicting factors can be regulated; it establishes the confines of the group and proposes methods for handling forces external to the community, whether arising from other groups or from nature and the supernatural.[22]

Many scholars recognize the sociological aspects of folklore studies and the need for data about societies in which the tales are used. The impact of folktales is very broad-based in that tales both reflect attitudes of the society and help control them. On the other hand, folklorists also look at the personal nature of tales and storytelling. The idea of the psychological impact of folktales concerns scholars who take a socio-psychological approach to the study of folklore. In a lengthy article using this approach, J. L. Fisher comments on the use of folktales as a psychological force in the society:

> The use of folktales to persuade others of the desirability or appropriateness of a particular course of action may be regarded from the point of view of individual psychology as a conative function of myth. Another conative function of myth is exhibited when storytellers perform simply in order to ingratiate themselves with their audience by pleasing it or informing it about valued knowledge.[23]

Each of these various critical approaches addresses different aspects of the study of the folktale. Most folklorists work in situations where storytelling can be observed firsthand. They are able to record not only the text, but storytelling techniques, audience responses, and the environment in which the tales are told. In the case of folktales in literature, such firsthand observations are not possible. Folktales in recent literary contexts may be known to still circulate orally, and in some cases folklorists are able to collect versions that are analogous to the literary presentation of the tale. In the case of folktales in

medieval literature, of course, this type of collecting is impossible. Certainly some tales that were popular in the Middle Ages continue to circulate, but the physical and sociological environment in which they are used is vastly different.

Although scholars are limited by their number and availability, manuscript sources provide a great deal of information. Indeed, the relationship between folklore and philology has been an important one since the time of the Grimm brothers. The great collections of folktales which circulated during the Middle Ages are a vital part of our knowledge of the importance of folklore during the period, despite the fact that they present somewhat polished versions of the folktales. Manuscripts, for example, are invaluable in tracing the development of a particular tale or group of tales. Folktales or other folkloric elements found in medieval literature can be studied and analyzed for reasons other than their historical value, however. In the process of following the development of a single tale, scholars reconstruct or infer much information about the medieval societies in which it functioned and thus shed new light on available texts and their medieval audiences. As Richard Dorson notes in an essay on the use of printed sources in the study of folklore, writers employ folklore in any number of ways. The focus of Dorson's essay is more recent printed matter; however the applicability of his ideas to medieval literature is evident in the following statement:

> Sometimes folklore provides bits of local color setting, and sometimes it supplies the heart of the narrative. Still again, oral literature may be refined and polished by one or more bards until it achieves the status of art literature, as with the Homeric folk epics. Consequently we cannot offer any easy generalization about the relation of folklore to literature, except to say that literature is indeed an invaluable, if ambiguous, source for the folklorist. Greater and lesser authors have often, if unwittingly, taken on the function of the field collector and participant observer and shown extraordinary alertness and sensitivity to folk culture. This role is not to be wondered at since master storytellers like Boccaccio, Chaucer,...could be expected to listen sympathetically to folk storytellers.[24]

The fact that the attitude of folklorists toward medievalists and vice versa has been somewhat cautious has hindered their collaboration. Folklorists frequently cite the adverse influence of Joseph Bedier's strong negative opinion of folklore studies on the work of folklorists in France, and the negative reaction of Roger Sherman Loomis to the possibility of folkloric elements in Arthurian literature as deterrents to the study of folklore in medieval literature. In Bruce Rosenberg's estimation medievalists often dismiss lightly or even ignore the importance of folklore to the study of medieval literature, while folklorists are guilty of simply identifying elements that are of interest to them without attempting any critical analysis of these elements as they relate to the work in which they occur.[25]

Many scholars have debated the problem of folklore in literature, a problem which is of particular importance in the study of medieval literature. Francis Lee Utley expresses one

attitude in his essay "Folk Literature: An Operational Definition":

> Of...medieval documents we must ask whether they are folktales in the strict sense even when they fit the motifs and episodes of a well-known tale type. The answer is usually no—most such tales, whether by...Chaucer or an anonymous medieval writer of fabliaux or exempla, are literary versions. We may even generalize to the extent of saying that we know no medieval folklore...[26]

Not only are medieval tales frozen in a fixed form, which is now a literary form, but the society of which they were once a vital part no longer exists. A literary work has a fixed historical and geographical form, and the fact that the work pertains to an identifiable society makes it far less elusive than folklore. Folklore, on the other hand, frequently changes context, sometimes radically altered in form or function by the change. However, whereas we accept the fixed form of the literary work as the norm, we have difficulty accepting the literary form of the folktale as folklore. The literary work is something like an electron microscope which allows us to follow the path of the particles we wish to study, but never to see the particles themselves. We see where medieval folklore has been, but as Utley stated, "we know no medieval folklore."[27] Perhaps it could also be said that the only folklore which we do know is that in which we are a participant.

Alan Dundes takes a rather different view from Utley's of the matter of literary study. As he states in "The Study of Folklore in Literature and Culture: Identification and Interpretation":

> ...the discipline of folklore has its own methodology applying equally well to literary and cultural problems. There are only two basic steps in the study of folklore in literature and in culture. The first step is objective and empirical; the second is subjective and speculative. The first might be termed identification and the second interpretation.[28]

With regard to the Libro de buen amor, the folktales have been identified. Scholars have studied the analogues and historical development of all the tales in several important works, and analyzed some of the tales extensively. The second step, interpretation, has not been done, however. The majority of the tales have not been treated as a serious or integral part of the narrative, but rather as an embellishment to the narrative, sometimes not even clearly related to it. The opinion of some scholars that the tales are not a serious consideration in the interpretation of the text is the result of misunderstanding the function of folklore in society, particularly in medieval society.

When folklorists analyze a tale as a part of a living body of folklore within a society which can be observed first-hand, they record the context or situation of the storytelling event from the observations. When dealing with a text from literary sources however, the society is not always available for study, as in the case of medieval literature. This fact certainly does not negate the validity of the studies of folkloric elements in medieval

literature. On the contrary, using each of the approaches mentioned, the analysis of folktales in a particular work can serve as a means of developing new perspectives on the understanding of that work. For example, the question of the validity of a tale as a true example of folklore may be studied through application of the historic-geographic method. This information not only helps determine possible sources of tales, but provides information about the author's relation to the literary tradition of the period. Structuralist approaches give insight into the internal structure of the tale or the tale's place in the structure of the text. Still other approaches analyze the function of the tale within the society which the literary work describes or creates. While the student of folklore must acknowledge the problems of applying folklore methodology to folk narrative in literary form, the literary critic must also acknowledge the need for the folklorist's understanding of the nature and function of folklore.

Examples of the variety of studies of folklore in medieval literature can be found in works about Beowulf, which has been studied by folklorists from several points of view. The well-known result of an historical approach is Beowulf and its Analogues, mentioned earlier. The poem has also been analyzed from a structuralist point of view with regard to the importance of the folktale which it embodies. Daniel Barnes, for example, postulated that the entire text of Beowulf could be regarded as a single tale, and he analyzed its structure according to the

methods defined by Propp.[29] Although Bruce Rosenburg later criticized Barnes in "Folktale Morphology and the Structure of Beowulf: A Counterproposal" for the assumption that the poem itself is a folktale, Rosenberg comments on the importance of both the historical and structural approaches to folktales.[30] Both the historical study and the structural analysis have contributed to our understanding of the work; however, neither is satisfactory to answer all the questions raised by the poem.

An important study of folklore in medieval Spanish literature is Deyermond's article "Motivos folklóricos y técnica estructural en el Libro de Apolonio."[31] Deyermond acknowledges the problems which medievalists have with regard to folklore, and suggests the importance of utilizing the materials developed by folklorists to further our understanding of medieval texts. Using the Libro de Apolonio as an example, Deyermond identifies some of the motifs in the work according to the Thompson index.

Deyermond's analysis is particularly important for its effect on the developing awareness of the presence and significance of folk motifs in medieval Spanish literature. The poet of the Libro de Apolonio has used traditional motifs; however, the resulting composition does not follow a traditional structure. In his comments regarding the structure of the work, Deyermond states:

> A medida que el poeta español trata de mejorar la estructura, de resolver las contradicciones y de llenar las lagunas, suprimirá inevitablemente muchos de los rasgos tradicionales que reflejan el folklore primitivo. Los cambios que representan un avance estético implican a la vez una pérdida para el

> historiador de la literatura y del folklore....Parece que algunos de los motivos folklóricos conservaban tanto poder que hasta en un poema muy culto del siglo XIII se imponían, aun cuando no se entendiesen completamente.[32]

As Deyermond indicates, the folk motifs may not even have been completely understood. However, it is clear, that although the poet of the Libro de Apolonio employs folk motifs in the creation of his narrative, it is not his intent to recreate a traditional context within the narrative. That is, he does not seek to create a literary setting in which folktales are narrated in an easily recognizable form by storytellers who consciously utilize these folk traditions. In this fact there is an important difference between the Libro de Apolonio and the Libro de buen amor, as will be shown later.

Regarding the Libro de buen amor, the need for details of its historical background upon which to base the analysis and interpretation of the text is met in large part by studies like those by Criado de Val, Lida de Malkiel, and Zahareas.[33] The portion of the text with which this study is concerned, the folktales, has also been discussed from an historical point of view in the works of Tacke and Lecoy.[34] Recently, Juan Carlos Temprano analyzed the tales according to the structuralist methodology of Propp.[35] However, there is a need for an interpretive approach which takes into consideration the importance of folktales as a means of communicating information or as a means of suggesting resolutions to conflict situations.

Using historical materials and research aids like the motif indexes it is possible to suggest probable responses of medieval audiences to each tale. These responses can then be compared to the response of the audience within the work itself as well as to the response of the present reader.

Our understanding and analysis of the use of folktales in the Libro de buen amor is a key factor in the recognition of those qualities which make it a great work rather than a mediocre one. Folktales embody the essence of the human condition. Although they are not in themselves a solution to the conflicts and chaos inherent in the nature of mankind, they are a valuable point of reference. Folktales present the problems, if not the answers, in a flexible yet tenacious format which is readily understandable to many of the western cultures. Literary versions do not destroy the essence of the folktale, but can play on the ambiguity that is an inherent characteristic of every tale. Jonathan Culler states:

> Social reality includes paradigms of organization, figures of intelligibility; and the interplay between a literary work and its historical ground lies in the way its formal devices exploit, transform, and supplement a culture's ways of producing meaning."[36]

Folktales are just such a paradigm of organization. Historical and structural studies of the folktales in question provide valuable information about the social reality and the method of organization, but it is in the study of the context in which the tales are presented and the use of the tales in that context that we see anomalies in their presentation. These anomalies are a key

factor in the recognition of the uniqueness of this aspect of the Libro de buen amor and of the non-medieval quality which the presentation of the tales imparts.

NOTES

1 Vladimir Propp, Morphology of the Folktale, Bibliographical and Special Series, Vol. 9 (Austin: University of Texas, 1968).

2 These terms are defined by many scholars. For brief definitions and some indication of the difficulties involved in classification see: Maria Leach and Jerome Fried, eds., Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend. 2 vols., (New York: Funk and Wagnall, 1949-1950).

3 W. F. Bryan and Germain Dempster, eds., Sources and Analogues of "Chaucer's Canterbury Tales" (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941); G. N. Garmonsway and Jacqueline Simpson, Beowulf and Its Analogues (London: Dent, 1968).

4 Francis Lee Utley, Introd., Once Upon a Time: On the Nature of Fairy Tales, by Max Luthi, trans. Lee Chadeayne and Paul Gottwald (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976).

5 Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson, The Types of the Folktale, 2nd rev. ed. Folklore Fellows Communications 184 (1961).

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7 Alan Dundes, Introd., Morphology of the Folktale, by V. Propp (Austin: University of Texas, 1968), xi-xiii

8 Jonathan Culler, The Pursuit of Signs (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), p. 23; Dundes, p. xi-xiii.

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11 Alan Dundes, "Structuralism and Folklore," in Studia Fennica, 20 (1976), p. 85.

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21 Roger Abrahams, "A Rhetoric of Everyday Life: Traditional Conversational Genres," Southern Folklore Quarterly 32 (1968) p. 48.

22 Abrahams, "A Rhetoric," p. 58.

23 Fisher, "The Sociopsychological," p. 258.

24 Richard M. Dorson, "The Use of Printed Sources," in Folklore and Folklife, ed. Richard M. Dorson (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1972) p. 471.

25 Bruce A. Rosenberg, "Folklore Methodology and Medieval Literature," Journal of the Folklore Institute, 13, No. 3 (1976), 313.

26 Francis Lee Utley, "Folk Literature: An Operational Definition," in The Study of Folklore, ed. Alan Dundes (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1965), p. 15.

27 Utley, "Folk Literature," p. 18.

28 Alan Dundes, "The Study of Folklore in Literature and Culture: Identification and Interpretation," Journal of American Folklore, 78 (1965), p.136.

29 Daniel Barnes, "Folktale Morphology and the Structure of Beowulf," Speculum, 45, No. 3 (1970), 416-434.

30 Bruce Rosenberg, "Folktale Morphology and the Structure of Beowulf: A Counterproposal," Journal of the Folklore Institute, 11, No. 3 (1975), 199-209.

31 A. D. Deyermond, "Motivos folklóricos y técnica estructural en el Libro de Apolonio," Filologia, 13 (1968-69), pp. 124-149.

32 Deyermond, pp. 147-148.

33 Manual Criado de Val, ed. El Arcipreste de Hita: El libro, el autor, la tierra, la epoca, Actas del I Congreso Internacional sobre el Arcipreste de Hita (Barcelona: SERESA, 1973); Maria Rosa Lida de Malkiel, Two Spanish Masterpieces: The "Book of Good Love" and "The Celestina" (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1961); Anthony Zahareas, The Art of Juan Ruiz, Archpriest of Hita (Madrid, 1965)

34 Otto Tacke, "Die Fabeln des Erzpriesters von Hita im Rahmen der mittelalterlichen Fabelliteratur," Romanische Forschungen, 31 (1912); Felix Lecoy, Recherches sur le "Libro de Buen Amor," de Juan Ruiz, archipretre de Hita (Paris: Droz, 1938).

35 Juan Carlos Temprano, "Hacia una morfologia de los cuentos populares del Libro de buen amor," Texto Critico, 30 (1984), p. 1-31.

36 Culler, p. 13.

CHAPTER II

THE MEDIEVAL TALE AND TALE COLLECTIONS

The use of story is basic to human nature and human development. As Huizinga proposed the concept of homo ludens to represent the primary function of play in human life, Kurt Ranke proposes the concept of homo narrans to represent the basic, primal need of human beings to express themselves in narrative forms. Using Huizinga's ideas as a starting point, Ranke discusses the importance of narrative in human societies, and develops the idea that narration is basic to human beings because:

> ...from the earliest days of their spiritual existence, human beings have given play to their emotions and conceptions through the narration of stories of all sorts....narratives in which, in short, early people came to terms with everything which affected them.[1]

Ranke makes these remarks in an essay in which he deals primarily with the categorization of folk prose. As mentioned in the previous chapter, matters of definition and classification have plagued folklorists since the beginning of folklore scholarship. The issue is not a simple matter of terminology, but the search for some means of identifying essential elements which differentiate specific types of folklore. By identifying those elements, folklorists hope to develop a workable system of organization and nomenclature. Ranke's opinion is that different

forms of folk narrative develop as a result of the expression of the specific type of human emotion or behavior with which the narrative deals. His concluding statement expresses succinctly Ranke's belief that the form and content of folk narratives are closely related:

> My simple intent was only to point out possible starting points for defining the Einfache Formen of our narrative tradition—that is, to show how homo narrans gives form in language not only to the surface level of his thoughts, but also to what is deepest and most basic in him.[2]

Often medievalists and literary critics observe the use of folklore in society and in literature, but do not address the issue of the functions of folklore in either. William R. Bascom, in an article first published in 1954, surveys the study of folklore and its relationship to culture. He identifies four functions of folklore based on his observations: to amuse; to validate culture and justify its rituals and institutions; to educate; and finally, to maintain conformity to accepted behavior patterns.[3] Although Bascom speaks in terms of folklore in general, he acknowledges the fact that different categories of folklore have specific functions which may vary somewhat from the ones listed. He also points out the somewhat paradoxical fact that folklore offers an acceptable outlet for expressing discontent with the institutions of the society. Bascom's final observations about the role of folklore in a society are of particular interest:

> Viewed thus, folklore operates within a society to insure conformity to the accepted cultural norms, and continuity from generation to generation through its role in education and the extent to which it mirrors culture. To the extent to which folklore contrasts with the accepted norms and offers socially acceptable forms of release through amusement or humor and through creative imagination and fantasy, it tends to preserve the institutions from direct attack and change.[4]

It is difficult to determine what approaches to use in the study of medieval folktales since the only context in which they occur is a literary one. The question of whether or not tales in a literary context are properly called folktales is an important one, but cannot be dealt with adequately in this study. Some medievalists contend that there is no medieval folklore, but I agree with Bruce Rosenberg that:

> Based on more than a century of field work and the scrutiny of archival holdings, folklorists are now certain that, as the folktale travels from teller to teller, it retains its essential outline and most of its salient features.[6]

Applying Rosenberg's idea to folklore in literature, the fact that tales in the Libro de buen amor have been recorded in a fixed form does not necessarily destroy those salient features.

Robert Georges has argued that no text, whether written or oral, constitutes folklore, but rather that a given text is one element in a relationship of complex human behaviors and interaction. Once recorded, the narrative text becomes simply a written record of the folklore, not an item of folklore in itself.[6] Georges further contends that it is not what folklorists

study, but the reasons that they document and analyze certain phenomena that make the study of folklore distinctive. He advocates the:

> study of continuities and consistencies in human behavior as these can be hypothesized or inferred from observations and observational records of what human beings express and the ways they express themselves through the tangible and intangible manifestations of such interactions.[7]

Alain Renoir gives one perspective of the relationship of oral and written folklore in his discussion of the possible functions of folk motifs in medieval literature and the way in which they are used to convey ideas. Renoir relates the oral formulaic method of oral composition to the use of oral formulaic units in written forms. He argues that studies of the oral formulaic units can be used profitably in the interpretation of medieval texts because both readers and listeners respond to the context of a situation by relating it to similar situations with which they are familiar. In other words, the familiar context conveyed by a formulaic expression elicits a predictable response from the intended audience.[8] Renoir suggests that the formulaic context allows us to focus on works in such a way that we are not bound by the limits of geography or chronology, or by the limitations of any single critical method.[9]

An article by Mary Ellen Lewis dealing with similarities between oral and written literature points out the fact that scholars have long recognized that oral and written literature

share a great deal with respect to content, as well as strategies and styles of communication. Whether written or oral, the presentation of the stories is a performance. Furthermore, the stylistic devices available to the artist allow him to use cues in order to elicit certain responses from the audience, either listener or reader.[10] With regard to audience response she states:

> The dialectic quality of early oral dialogue is most widely known in the Socratian context. In the oral milieu it continues and thrives as an important aspect of the communication of the folk legend....(T)he dialectic strategy is also used in written literature, sometimes within a work and sometimes between a work and the reader / audience, attesting again to rhetorical similarities of all literature.[11]

Using Hawthorne's treatment of legend in the short story, "The Great Carbuncle" as an example, she discusses the multiple responses of the characters to the legend. Just as each character brings his or her own expectations to the hearing of the legend, so each reader brings a unique set of ideas to the reading.[12]

In a recent article reviewing four books which deal with folklore, Harriet Goldberg arrives at the following conclusion about the study of folklore in literature:

> The correct direction is the growth of an awareness of folklore or folklife as a dynamically reciprocal process which shapes the cultural identity of a group. This fluid process both supplies and reflects the social attitudes and moral imperatives of its participants, and tends to move freely at all levels among the members of society.[13]

Although oral and literary forms cannot be equated, there are many examples of a blending of the two traditions. Tales used in literature may continue to develop orally, but whether or not the folk narrative in question is observed in present cultures, we can be sure that certain essential characteristics are common to both. As Lewis's and Renoir's articles indicate, some of the same criteria for interpretation apply to folktales told in a literary context as well as to folktales in live situations. From historical data we know something of fourteenth century Spanish culture, its political and economic situations, and the structure of its multicultural society. If we assume that there is some degree of continuity in human behavior and expression, then we can infer even more about these structures based on the information in the tales of the Libro de buen amor and the manner in which they are conveyed.

The use of story has been a topic of interest in western societies at least since the efforts of the ancient Greeks to develop theories of communication. Treatises on rhetoric regularly mention narrative as an essential element of rhetorical theory. One aspect of the development of rhetorical theory that is of particular interest is the homiletic tradition in medieval Europe. James T. Murphy observes that the ars praedicandi, theoretical manuals for preachers, usually appeared with ancillary treatises. Collections of exempla along with additional information about man and animals and the world are one of the five types of treatises which comprise this rhetorical system for

preachers.[14] Of the medieval tale collections which circulated in Spain, many were part of the homiletic tradition, or were based on such collections. The Dialogues of Gregory the Great, Disciplina Clericalis, and Gesta Romanorum were among the most popular and widely known.

From historical studies of folktales, as well as first hand observation, scholars have learned that a single tale may suggest multiple responses to an audience, a characteristic which helps account for folktales' impressive stability and tenacity in a variety of constantly changing environments. Although the text of the tales is remarkably stable, the emphasis which different audiences give a particular response, or the perception which the society has of the tales may change.

Sources much earlier than the medieval period indicate that there have long been disagreements over the appropriate use and interpretation of folktales. Morten Norjgaard points out the tension that existed even in the earliest versions of Aesop in the Greek and Roman traditions:

> It was an abiding problem, in classical and medieval times (and still today?), how to amalgamate narrative and moral, and we can think of the antique fable as a form which represents a never-ending search for an integration of moral and structure within the framework of the didactic animal tale.[15]

Nørjgaard goes on to state that the moralization of the fable occurs when storytellers attempt to confirm a sense of justice and virtue, which are transcendental values, rather than a sense of

strength and cunning, which are practical values. In other words, the moralization comes as a response to the society in which the fables are told. The fables in themselves are not explicitly moral or immoral.[16] Instead, folktales are an expression of basic human characteristics and needs. They accurately portray situations which produce conflict in society, as well as acceptable resolutions to the conflict without explicit moral judgments.

The wide range of interpretative possibilities has frequently been perceived as a negative characteristic of folktales. Not only did medieval authorities question whether the tales' primary intent was to instruct or to delight, but whether they were a means of conveying wisdom or illustrating a moral at all. The perception that tales are deceitful is the outgrowth of these reactions to folktales. Examples of how the discrepancy developed are found in the history of the folktale in most of western Europe. Speaking specifically of Spain, María Jesús Lacarra discusses the transmission of the great collections of eastern tales in Cuentística medieval en España.[17] Scholars now agree that the bulk of these tales as we know them originated in India. The earliest written version, Tantrakkyayik, is known from 100 A.D., and a more familiar and later collection appeared about 250 - 300 A.D. under the name Panchatantra. In the thirteenth century many of these tales were translated into Spanish in the collection known as El libro de Calila e Digna. The oriental versions of the collections were clearly didactic, in the sense that they were

used to teach. As long as compilers could manipulate the tales to illustrate a particular outcome, and insure an appropriate audience response, the stories were also popular in medieval European societies as sermon exempla. Authorities found it difficult, however, to accept the didactic usefulness of the tales when the wisdom which they conveyed was clearly of a more practical nature and perhaps even contrary to the spiritual values advocated by the church. Rather than risk the audience's misinterpretation, the church suppressed the use of exempla as a teaching device.[18]

Some of the questions raised by medieval clergy with regard to the appropriateness of the use of folktales may be a reflection of cultural changes in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In an article dealing primarily with folk traditions and the church, Jean-Claude Schmitt notes that the theological position of the church of this period was to reject the notion of ambivalence. Those traditions which did not conform to the sense of rationality dictated by the church's position were relegated to the realm of superstition or worse.[19] Throughout their history, folktales retain their basic form, but an audience's response to the events narrated in a given tale varies in any society according to the specific situation in which the tale is used. This can lead to ambiguity in the interpretation of the tale, and that ambiguity can be used to deceive. The church's difficulty in accepting folk narrative, which is often ambiguous, is in keeping with the general attitude of the period.

The fact that tales function on different levels depending on the circumstances of their use is apparent in medieval tale collections. When tales are collected in a written format, the particular function emphasized by each compiler may change. In the twelfth century Petrus Alphonsi recognized and acknowledged the ambiguous nature of folk tales, stating in the introduction to his Disciplina Clericalis that his intent is to teach, but in a palatable manner.[20] He may have had another purpose in mind, however. Given the choice of materials included by Petrus Alphonsi and the manner in which he arranges these, G. T. Shepherd feels that he "is seeking to make popular material educational quite as much as to make education popular."[21] The dilemma over whether to emphasize the didactic or the entertaining aspect of the tales is addressed even more clearly by Walter Map in De nugis curialium. These tales were collected by Map for the purpose of entertainment, with the idea that they might also reinforce morality.[22]

Two works composed within the same time frame as the Libro de buen amor are also good examples of collections with different emphases. The later and less familiar work is Libro de los exemplos por a.b.c.. The format is that of the traditional alphabet of stories which was very popular during the early medieval period. However, as Keller notes in the introduction to his critical edition of the Libro de los exemplos, the medieval church had begun to question the efficacy of exempla in sermons. It would hardly have been appropriate for the Archdeacon, Clemente

Sánchez de Vercial to compile a collection of tales intended for sermon illustrations. It is Keller's opinion, and indeed it seems likely, that Sanchez de Vercial's intent was first to amuse, then to teach.[23] The more familiar work, Conde Lucanor, presents the stories in the frame of a wise counselor responding to his master's requests for advice by narrating an appropriate folktale. The situation presented is clearly a secular one, and the advice is often of a very practical nature. This collection illustrates a more didactic interpretation of the folktales, although their presentation is less ecclesiastical.

Janet Martin discusses John of Salisbury's use of classical sources in Policraticus and Metalogicon, and notes, "He used the selection from Gellius first of all as exempla to entertain and persuade his reader."[24] This follows the pattern of use common during the period. As Martin goes on to explain, however, the use of these ancient sources at times, "stimulated John to write about subjects that he might not have written about otherwise, or at least to write about them in a significantly different way."[25] The response of readers to these texts could be predicted, and at least one use of the classical texts would be to reinforce the idea of John's audience being an elite group able to understand the full implication of the use of the exempla.[26] The more informed audience would recognize John's use of the texts as a means of discussing the perversion of values in his day, an implication which would not have been understood by all readers.

An article by Evelyn S. Newlyn discussing the versification of Aesop's fables by Robert Henryson (c.1430 - 1506) provides another example of folk texts deliberately used to communicate multiple messages. Newlyn's observations about his treatment and use of the fables suggests that Henryson's attitude is remarkably similar to that expressed by Juan Ruiz in the Libro de buen amor. A text may seem rough on the surface, but once the inner meat is understood it seems rich and sweet. In her remarks about Henryson's use of the fable to comment on social or political issues Newlyn states:

> In dealing thus with contemporary medieval conditions, the fables reveal the poet's concern for the failure of the individual as well as for the failure of society. He uses the fable form to convey instruction; to point a moral; to satirize political, social, or ecclesiastical error; and to condemn the breakdown of morality at all levels and in all institutions, but particularly in the individual. There are underlying rules in Henryson's world and many of his poems deal with the misfortune that comes to those who do not observe the rules...[27]

Newlyn goes on to discuss three of the fables used by Henryson, and to identify the underlying issues treated by his use of them. His work serves as a valuable point of comparison because it does deal with issues other than specifically spiritual ones. However, although the issues may be secular, Henryson's view remains strictly within the limits of a moralist's perspective. To insure that the reader is led to the appropriate conclusion, Henryson supplies the Moralitas. He does draw upon the broader sense of the fable, but he still confines the tale to a narrower

interpretation than Juan Ruiz, and in this at least does not achieve the level of complexity that Juan Ruiz does.

The change in attitude which took place in the transition between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance with regard to the ambiguity in the effects and purposes of text was certainly not limited to the texts of popular tales. Rather it is one example of many changes observed during this period of rapid growth in numbers and diversity of readers. Luis Alborg notes the effects which the changing complexion of the society had on the literature of the period:

> Esta literatura, que pretende ser un reflejo directo de la vida ordinaria, tiende también hacia las enseñanzas morales, pero entendidas éstas no exactamente como un ideal de virtud, sino como regla pragmática de vida, como un consejo que ayude a manejarse entre las dificultades cotidianas, los peligros y las insidias de las gentes, aunque tampoco faltan, sin embargo, las obras de grave caracter doctrinal, dada la vena ascética tan peculiar de la literatura española.[28]

J.N.H. Lawrance's study of lay literacy points out some of the changes in preference with regard to reading and library holdings among the laity. He suggests that the variety of holdings found in lay libraries of late medieval Spain reflects the same sense of duality found among the twelfth century compilers of tale collections. The need for both recreation and edification that is expressed by their holdings differs from the needs indicated by holdings of the professional or institutional libraries of the period.[29] In fact, the duality of lay library

collections may have come in direct conflict with the values taught by medieval religious institutions.

In addition to the problem of ambiguity, Phillips Salman notes the conflict between the Horacian idea that a text should both instruct and delight and that importance should be given to style, as opposed to the Aristotelian idea of the importance of ethical content. A third consideration discussed by Salman is the effect of the text on the audience. In summary he writes, "All three show a shift away from stress in the medieval period on the product of reading toward a stress on the process of reading," and he relates this shift to the general movement away from the religious and toward the secular.[30] Whereas the medieval mind was guided through reading to contemplation, the Renaissance mind was guided into action through the process of reading. Didacticism then becomes a means of persuading the reader into action through participation between the reader and the poet.[31]

The varied examples cited above illustrate attitudes toward folktales which have existed since people have become aware of popular stories as a body of narrative with specific characteristics and functions. Different methods of study have been used in attempts to identify and define these characteristics and functions in such a way that the phenomenon of folk narrative could be studied comprehensively, particularly in the area where it interacts with medieval literature. Folklorists recognize the importance of studying all aspects of the tale-telling process, since the significance of any given item of folklore will vary

according to the context in which each listener hears it. However, as Alan Dundes notes regarding oral folklore, "relatively little research has been devoted to the process of decoding the message, that is, the intricacies of the listeners' perceptions and understandings of the message."[32]

The collections of stories mentioned above are examples of collections of popular tales which have been brought together under a very loose system of organization or simple frame story. However, the Libro de buen amor falls into a different category of literature with regard to folklore. It is a work which incorporates a significant number of folktales, but is not a work devoted solely, or even primarily, to relating those tales. In a study of the Libro de buen amor, we move out of the realm of the folktale as a popular form of medieval literature and into the realm of the folktale as a narrative technique employed by the author of a literary text. The important contribution of Juan Ruiz to the development of the use of story is not the fact that he included stories, but the fact that he both narrated the tale and created a fictive context similar to one in which it might have been used.

With regard to the Libro de buen amor, the relationship of folktales to the context in which Juan Ruiz presents them is critical. We know from the above review that the texts of the tales as recorded in the manuscript of the Libro de buen amor are representative of folktales that were popular in the fourteenth century. Our knowledge of medieval tale collections, the stated

purposes of their compilers, and their wide circulation clarifies the relationship of the Libro de buen amor to this tradition. It also gives us a sense of the functions of folktales in medieval societies as well as the attitude of the church toward their use. With this information in mind we can more effectively analyze how the tales in the Libro de buen amor are used for communicating important information to the audience. We can also postulate the various ways in which medieval audiences would have been likely to respond to the tales. The collections serve as a guide to help determine what the expected responses were and to help set norms against which to compare Juan Ruiz's use of the folktales. Assuming that Georges and others are correct in their assessment that certain elements of human behavior manifest themselves in forms which we label "folklore," and that these forms are consistent through time and space, then we have a valuable record in the Libro de buen amor of certain characteristics of medieval human behavior as well as a different perspective with which to view the use of the folktale by Juan Ruiz.

Virtually all of the major studies of the Libro de buen amor have examined some aspect of the fables employed by Juan Ruiz. The most important of the early studies of the Libro de buen amor is Felix Lecoy's Recherches sur le "Libro de buen amor". As Deyermond noted in his Prologue to the new edition of Lecoy's text, "the book as a whole remains an essential starting point for any serious investigation of the Libro de Buen Amor, and the greater part of Lecoy's findings are still accepted as

definitive."[33] Certainly this is true with regard to Lecoy's study of the folktales. Lecoy devotes two substantial chapters to the tales, their sources and any peculiar characteristics of the tales as employed by Juan Ruiz. This information is critical to our understanding of the historical background of the tales in the Libro de buen amor. Lecoy determined that Juan Ruiz's principle source for most of the tales was the Aesopic collection of Walter of England. He also postulates sources for tales which were not included by Walter. In those cases where two or more versions were current, he notes the primary characteristics of both. Despite his careful attention to the details of sources and analogues, however, Lecoy gives little attention to the context or manner in which Juan Ruiz uses the tales.

Otto Tacke, cited several times by Lecoy, published his doctoral dissertion on the Libro de buen amor in 1912, more than twenty-five years before the publication of Recherches.[34] Tacke's study deals primarily with historical aspects of the development and use of the fables included by Juan Ruiz, and certainly must be recognized as an important work in the history of Libro de buen amor scholarship. Although he presents a thorough study of the tales, it is generally felt that Lecoy's work goes beyond that done by Tacke, and in some cases corrects it.

For the most part critics have not dealt with the fables in terms of their function throughout the entire text nor their relationship to the text as a whole. Most regard the tales as illustrative material external to the frame story, and not always

entirely in harmony with the message presented in the primary text. Generally speaking, each determines that the tales serve the overall intent of the work according to their own interpretation. For example, Zahareas focuses on the humorous aspect of Juan Ruiz's tales and notes that, "His stories and comments are, therefore, offered not only for instructive or corrective purposes but also for wholehearted enjoyment."[35] Lida de Malkiel, on the other hand, feels that the tales are a manifestation of the didactic intent of the Libro de buen amor[36] Otis Green turns the tables and states that the section on the seven deadly sins is an artistic device which serves "as a sort of endoskeleton that enables the poet to display his creative virtuosity as a teller of vivid illustrative fables."[37]

The contributions of the work of these and other scholars to our knowledge of the Libro de buen amor cannot be underestimated. There is no doubt that general studies of the work have contributed to our understanding and interpretation of the tales used by Juan Ruiz. With regard to the sources and literary history of the tales, most scholars tend to accept Lecoy's findings. Studies of the history and particular uses of individual tales have been done in some cases, especially for those tales which occur alone and are most obviously a comment on the nature of the book or the society for which Juan Ruiz wrote.

Only the most recent scholarship however, begins to recognize the relationship of the tales of the Libro de buen amor to European popular traditions as well as literary traditions. Of

the few studies that have been done, Ian Michael's lengthy article in "Libro de buen amor" Studies is particularly important for its recognition of the folkloric characteristics of the tales. While he does not discount the value of Lecoy's work, Michael does point out that Lecoy did not give consideration to the oral tradition of which these tales are a part. In addition he suggests that the significance of tales may be obscured by the search for sources and analogues. Michael states, "The hunt for sources may offer the further disadvantage of concentrating interest of a folkloric kind on to the origin and propagation of individual tales while paying little attention to a particular author's artistic use of them."[38] His recognition of the importance of the artistic function of the tales brings an important new focus to the study of the Libro de buen amor because it considers both the folkloric and artistic aspects of the tales together.

Michael also notes that, "the popular tale, although it often has an implicit moral lesson, need not possess a lesson at all and, indeed, may frequently be capable of imparting quite different lessons."[39] This has been shown in the above comments on medieval tale collections and responses to them. I heartily agree with Michael that attention to the peculiarities introduced by an author can give insight into the method and style used and that, "The function of the tales in these cases will not be hard to uncover: they generally have the traditional two-fold task of entertaining and teaching." On the other hand, I disagree with his assessment of Juan Ruiz's attitude toward the tales: "With

Juan Ruiz popular tales are accessory only; they are always subordinated to his main purpose."[40] Michael does go on to state the importance of studying the relation of the tales to the main theme however, and the comments that he makes regarding the apparent contradictions caused by the use of the tales do move us toward a better understanding of the complexity of the relationship.

The most recent treatment of the body of tales found in the Libro de buen amor is an article by Juan Carlos Temprano, "Hacia una morfología de los cuentos populares del Libro de buen amor." Temprano notes the problems encountered by Michael in dealing with the moral point commonly associated with the tales, and comments:

> El estudio de Michael prueba, a mi modo de ver, que cuentos de diferentes procedencias...han sido manipulados por la habilidad artística de Juan Ruiz, confiriéndoles una serie de características comunes....La manipulación que Michael muestra se centra principalmente en lo que podríamos llamar la estructura externa de los cuentos, en la parte donde Juan Ruiz presenta la lección moral de los mismos, que es lo que constituye el punto de enlace o acoplamiento con la narrativa principal.[41]

Temprano then proposes to study the internal structure of the tales according to the model developed by Propp and without regard to the moral lessons stated or implied. The principal conclusions of his study are that there are a fixed number of six functions (as defined by Propp) in the tales considered, and that these usually occur in a fixed order. He determines that there are three dramatis personae: the protagonist, the antagonist, and the

friend (good or false) of the protagonist. Temprano also notes one important auxiliary item in the tales—food.[42]

Some of the most insightful statements of the article are Temprano's concluding remarks. First, he acknowledges the important relationship of the narrator to the tale, and cites certain characteristics which occur with each narrator. His study emphasizes the fact that the recognition of the interaction between narrator and tale is critical to the analysis of any storytelling situation. Finally, Temprano states:

> Digamos para terminar que a la manipulación externa llevada a cabo por Juan Ruiz en sus cuentos para que la lección moral de los mismos encaje en el marco narrativo de la totalidad de la obra, hay que añadir una segunda, y más sutil, manipulación, consciente o inconsciente, que hace que estos cuentos de tan distintas procedencias queden sometidos a una misma estructura interna.[43]

An author is the product of a period and environment, and therefore writes out of those experiences which comprise his background. As noted earlier, folktales and the context in which they are used are generally very stable; therefore, we can assume that Juan Ruiz's presentation of the tales in the Libro de buen amor is representative of the function and context of tales in the medieval period in general, and indicative of Juan Ruiz's understanding of folklore in particular. However, in the Libro de buen amor we find that the tales often have multiple meanings or seem to be misused. In order to understand Juan Ruiz's use of the tales we must try to determine what information he conveys through

the multiple meanings and apparent misuse which occurs within the context of the storytelling event which he creates.

In several important sections of the Libro de buen amor Juan Ruiz utilizes the tale as the principal form of communication between characters. Through the exchange of tales, with very little additional comment, the characters carry on an extensive debate which determines their course of action in the situation. The telling of the tales thus is an event that demands the active participation of the audience as well as the storyteller. In these sections both audience and storyteller are fictional characters created by Juan Ruiz.

In other sections of the work, Juan Ruiz uses the tales in narrative passages either in a context comparable to that of sermon exempla or as part of the authors comments. One of the two principal narrators of these tales is the autobiographical protagonist created by the author. He is the "real" person who is the link between the reader and the text and speaks directly to the reader in some cases. The other key narrator is Don Amor, an allegorical personification of that force which rules the life of the archpriest. These two characters narrate all the tales in this section, and for most of the tales one of the two is also the audience. The author addresses the remaining tales to the reader.

By employing popular tales rather than direct commentary, the narrators, whether the author Juan Ruiz or his fictional creations, can speak indirectly to a situation that could not be approached openly, a characteristic and typical use of folktales

as noted earlier. Their indirect method of communication functions on as many as three levels. First, the fictional narrator and audience within the social framework of the autobiography respond to the context created by Juan Ruiz. Second, readers of the Libro de buen amor respond to the literary event in the context of their own experience. A third level develops when Juan Ruiz or one of the fictional narrators offers an interpretation of the tale.

Although Juan Ruiz uses the tales in such a way that they may appear to convey the moral generally associated with them, the impact of these traditional stories on the development of the fiction may contradict that moral. In some cases, it may even be out of character with the stated purposes or values of the characters who use it. The multiple responses which are inherent in any storytelling situation are a powerful literary device in the hands of Juan Ruiz. By using this ambiguity, he appears to subvert the conventions of his time and deliberately mislead the reader.

The importance of deceit as both cause and means of resolution of human conflict was mentioned earlier. The motif of deceit is by far the most important in the tales in the Libro de buen amor. In addition, Juan Ruiz practices his own form of verbal deceit in the manner in which he uses the tales. The context of the storytelling, which is the narration of the tale and the audience response to it, subverts the content of the story. The content does not change, but the context affects the

reception of the content, either supporting the moral associated with the story, or suggesting that the moral is not valid. We might say that his work confirms the church's position that such tales were not instructive, but dangerous.

A close look at the stories and the storytelling events in the Libro de buen amor follows. Through comparison of the various meanings that are communicated openly by the storytellers, or that are implied by the storytelling context and reception of the audience, we begin to understand the importance of the traditional tale to the complex structure of the Libro de buen amor.

NOTES

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CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF TALES -- NARRATIVE SETTING

The tales of the Libro de buen amor fall into two categories of setting or storytelling context, a narrative setting and a dialogue setting. The key factor in the division of the tales into these categories is the identity of the storyteller and the audience. Either Juan Ruiz, author of the text, or the archpriest, protagonist of the fictive autobiography, is present for each storytelling which occurs in the narrative setting. Juan Ruiz narrates tales for the reader only, and does not portray himself as an audience for any storytelling. In some cases the archpriest is the storyteller and in others the audience. The other storyteller is Don Amor, the allegorical figure created by Juan Ruiz and berated by the archpriest in a lengthy narrative for causing so many of the archpriest's problems.

Chapter III deals with the tales that are presented in a narrative context. Four distinct types of storytelling situations are studied in this section. A single tale comprises the first type, which deals with the archpriest's evaluation of one of his own unsuccessful love affairs. The second type of situation involves a long sequence of tales which serve as illustrative material both in the archpriest's long speech to Don Amor and in Don Amor's response. These tales are part of the confrontation

between Don Amor and the archpriest, but Juan Ruiz presents them in a narrative format rather than in the course of dialogue. The third type, also a single tale, is part of the archpriest's advice to women who feel tempted to take a lover. Finally, three tales which occur at various points in the text, and illustrate the author's general comments on the nature of the book, make up the fourth type. Grouping the tales according to context prevents us from discussing them in order of their appearance in the text. The three tales in the fourth group occur at widespread points, two in the very early passages and another in the closing verses of the work.

After the opening sections of the Libro de buen amor, the archpriest narrates the events of his own usually unsuccessful amorous adventures. He relates a single tale as part of his brief comments about his third attempted love affair. After describing the woman and his efforts to seduce her, he tells how she refused his offer. The archpriest evaluates the affair by comparing it to the story of the thief and the mastiff. When the barking mastiff confronts him, the thief tries to silence the dog with poisoned bread. The dog refuses to accept the bribe, saying that he cannot throw away all that his master has given him for the sake of one night's bread.[1]

Juan Ruiz casts himself in the role of the thief who is turned away. On the one hand, in comparing himself to the thief, the archpriest admits by the use of the tale that he is representing himself to the woman as something that he is not. He

offers her many things, but does not tell her truthfully what dangers lie ahead. Lecoy and Michael point out several moral lessons that derive from this tale and are popularly associated with it. The most common interpretation is that it illustrates the dangers of gluttony, but a second moral having to do with the dog's loyalty is also associated with it. Yet a third possibility is the wisdom of self-preservation. The mastiff may represent loyalty to the master, or he may exemplify prudence in realizing that the bread which the thief offers would be little reward for losing his security and that the bread may be poisoned besides. Analogues and possible sources of the story indicate that both were current interpretations.[2]

This tale is in keeping with the tone that Juan Ruiz has set up to this point. Whatever her reasons, the dueña successfully avoids becoming involved with the archpriest. Perhaps as in the well-known tale of the Greeks and the Romans, the reasons are not as important as the result. Certainly we sense in the archpriest's comments a positive attitude to prudence; it is a virtue that is looked on with favor. The woman acts prudently, regardless of her motivation for doing so. Deceit is a constant problem which challenges the prudent, and things are seldom what they seem.

Even truth may have many aspects, as the ambiguity of the tales in which people couch their wisdom indicates. The explicit message of the tale and its context exemplify prudent action. The multiple meanings associated with the tale allow Juan Ruiz to

imply that truth and right are not absolutes. If "right" and "wrong" choices are based on spiritual virtues, then the tale suggests that right choices are not necessarily made for the expected or "right" reasons. For example, the mastiff demonstrates prudence, but the tale does not make clear the motivation for his choice. The audience may assume that the animal's sense of loyalty prevails, moving him to risk his own life for his master's. That is the spiritual or "right" aspect of prudence. On the practical or "wrong" side, prudence is simply the most effective approach to life. In the case of the mastiff, his choice saves his own life as well as the master's. The reasons for making that choice must be determined by the audience. Depending on the knowledge each audience brings to the storytelling, the interpretations will vary and some audiences will see several of the possibilities. If this mulitiplicity itself is part of the message that Juan Ruiz wishes to communicate, then he departs from medieval norms, particularly those held by the church.

Following this failure, Don Amor visits the archpriest one night. When he recognizes his visitor, the archpriest immediately begins to deride him, accusing him not only of being a liar and deceiver, but for leading people into mortal sin and ultimate destruction. This is the longest section of narrative tales (sts.181 - 371). Throughout the entire first part of the so-called debate, Don Amor does not respond. Rather, the archpriest presents all of his arguments in one long monologue to

Don Amor. With no pause for rebuttal, he delivers an address that resembles a sermon with numerous exempla. The first two tales are part of the introductory material. The archpriest begins his discourse by saying that Don Amor treats men unfairly, rewarding them with lies and pain and very little pleasure. Once under Love's power, people become weak and helpless to defend themselves. His complaints about the effects of falling in love recall the descriptions in both The Dove's Neckring and Le Roman de la Rose, two well-known works about love that were popular during the period.[3]

The tale of the youth who wanted to marry three women is the first in the archpriest's narrative and constitutes part of his introductory remarks to Don Amor. In this many-faceted tale a young man upsets his family and friends when he decides that he wants to marry three women. After much discussion, he agrees to marry only two of them, and to marry the younger woman one month before the second. The tale does not imply approval of the youth's desire to wed more than one woman. His wishes conflict with the marriage norms accepted by the family and others, but the family shows wisdom in handling the problem. Love and marriage resolve the matter without any lasting damage. At the end of the month he decides that he can handle only one wife at a time, and that even the one is sometimes more demanding than he anticipated. The youth not only loses the strength of his love for the other women, but his physical strength as well. The final section of the tale tells how he is unable to stop his father's millstone

after his marriage, when before it had been an easy task for him (189 - 196). Although, as Ian Michael points out, Juan Ruiz probably borrowed the millstone episode from another tale, we can assume that he included it in order to make a point which he deemed important to his arguments.[4]

The archpriest blames Love for the loss of the prodigious physical strength which the boy had before his marriage: "non provó más tenér lā muela, sol non lo asmó. // Assí tu devanéo el garçón loco domó" (196 cd). He does not elaborate on the loss of his desire for the other women, but suggests that even the one wife has sapped his strength. The interpretation of the tale as an illustration of the debilitating effects of love is in keeping with Juan Ruiz's message about the problems of love, sin, and death according to Roger Walker.[5] However, the youth comments to the millstone, "... ¡Ay, molino rezio, aun te vea casado!" (195 d). The archpriest accuses Love of conquering and ruling the youth, but he implies that marriage, not love, is the real culprit. While the youth is in love and only hoping to marry the three women, his strength remains intact. After his marriage the youth's capacity for love as well as physical strength diminish. In a final ambiguous twist, the archpriest states in the closing stanza of the tale: "A la mujer primera él tanto lā amó // que a lā otra donzella nunca más la tomó" (196 ab).

After another brief tirade against the evils of love, he begins another tale. This time the archpriest points out that those who have never loved at all are better off than those who

fall prey to love's snares. The tale that he chooses as an illustration is the story of the frogs who ask for a king. Not satisfied with the log that Jupiter sends first, the frogs insist that they need a king to serve, so Jupiter sends a stork. When the frogs complain that their lives are now in danger since the stork preys on the frogs, Jupiter is unsympathetic and tells them that they should have been satisfied with the freedom that they once enjoyed (199 - 206).

Ian Michael looks for exact or close parallels between the outer narrative of Juan Ruiz and the inner autobiographical narrative of the fictive archpriest. He sees the lack of parallel as a flaw in the narrative.[6] Little is gained from trying to match each character or situation of the tale to a character or situation in the frame story of the archpriest's affairs, but the often ironic relationship of the various possible interpretations of the tales adds to the understanding of the text. The tale states the message that people should leave well enough alone and be satisfied with what they have. The lesson is one which the archpriest might have been wise to learn. Had he been satisfied after his failures to win a lady's love, and abandoned his efforts, he could have spared himself quite a bit of trouble. The fact that he applies this tale to Don Amor, implying that, like Jupiter, Don Amor is impatient and unsympathetic toward those that he rules, conveys a second interpretation. The archpriest does not heed his own advice, although his use of the tale proves that he knows the "right" way to respond in this situation. His lack

of prudence lies in knowing which course is best and choosing not to follow that course, regardless of the consequences. The tale and its application comment on the human condition in that people deceive themselves to get what they desire, even when it is in their power to know that the thing they seek will cause their destruction.

The next portion of this group of tales constitutes the heart of the debate with Love and uses the seven deadly sins as a frame. The archpriest blames Don Amor for exercising his influence to deceive people and cause them to fall prey to one of the seven deadly sins. Beginning with covetousness, the archpriest describes the perils of each of these sins and berates Don Amor for his part in the downfall of mankind. He tells one or more tales in each section. His remarks before and after each story are generally short and do not include more than a brief comment on the interpretation of the tale. Each tale occurs systematically as the closing comment of a section of the tightly organized discourse on the seven deadly sins and Love's role in man's temptation to succumb to them. The archpriest does not explicitly apply any of the tales to the arguments as he presents them. In this section more than any other the tales are difficult to categorize "neatly" according to their moral lessons. In fact, the ambiguity of the tales often makes it difficult to determine which moral truth the archpriest wishes to illustrate. He repeatedly states an interpretation which supports the arguments of his address to Don Amor. However, the structure of the tale

along with its relationship to the narrative force the reader to question whether this is the archpriest's primary point. The manipulation of the function of story both enriches the work and shows the depth and flexibility of the traditional tale. It also indicates Juan Ruiz's awareness of the powerful communicative force embodied in the tales and his ability to utilize the different levels of interpretation available to him.

The first sin, covetousness, is the root of all others, according to the archpriest. Those who covet are like the dog who sees his reflection in the water, and, thinking that he can have both the meat in his own mouth as well as the meat in the mouth of the dog that he sees, loses not only the coveted meat, but also the meat that he holds (226 - 229). The connection with Love is stated in the lines that follow:

> Cada día contece al cobdicioso atal:
> cuida ganar contigo e pierde su cabdal;
> de aquesta raíz mala nace todo el mal:
> es la mala cobdicia, un pecado mortal.
> (228 a-d)

An important factor in this tale and in several others in the section is the idea of self-deception. The dog's covetousness clouds his judgment and he is the cause of his own loss.

The archpriest's remarks on pride begin immediately after the conclusion of the tale of the dog. In the opening lines he deals with the relationship of pride to the lack of fear. People develop excess pride when they are not afraid. Lack of fear

leaves them open to pride, and pride makes them do things that are evil and cause their ruin.

> Sobervia mucha traes ado miedo non as;
> piensas, pues non as miedo, tú de qué passarás,
> joyas para tu amiga de qué las comprarás:
> robas por esto e furtas, por que tú penarás.
> (230 a-d)

Pride and the lack of fear have brought many low; even the angels fell because of pride. Pride causes the strong to fall when the weak remain:

> El omne muy sobervio e mucho denodado,
> que non ha de Dios miedo nin cata aguisado,
> ante muere que otro más flaco e mas lazrado;
> contécel como al asno con el cavallo armado:
> (236 a-d)

The tale of the horse and the ass gives an example of how pride causes the fall of the horse. In the story the horse's master has become involved in a fight over a woman. On their way to the battle, the horse, proud of his own and his master's great strength, makes fun of an ass and runs him off the road. They meet again after the battle in which the master is defeated and the horse so badly wounded that he will not be able to fight again (237 - 245).

Juan Ruiz plays on a wide variety of implications in this section. Pride brings about the downfall of the horse, while the lowly ass that he had scorned and run down remains unscathed. He employs the <u>ubi sunt</u> motif both in talking about the trappings of

honor that the horse once had and in a more general tone about the transitory nature of life:

> ¿Dó es tu noble freno e tu dorada silla?
> ¿Dó es la tu sobervia? ¿Dó es la tu renzilla?
> Siempre bivrás mesquino e con mucha manzilla:
> vengue la tu sobervia tanta mala postilla."
>
> Aquí tomen ensiemplo e lición cada día
> los que son muy sobervios, con su grand orgullía:
> que fuerça, edat e onra, salut e valentía,
> non pueden durar siempre: vanse con mancebía.
> (244 - 245)

Scholars hold two views regarding the interpretation of the use of this motif. Zahareas, for example, feels that in this tale alone of this group Juan Ruiz "demonstrates better than ordinary skill," and believes that the motif is ironic.[7] Lecoy, on the other hand, indicates that Juan Ruiz simply adopted the material as it appears in Walter, and does not suggest the idea of parody.[8]

Although the tale may be intended primarily to illustrate the sin of pride and incidentally to relate to love as Ian Michael says, there are several interesting twists in the telling.[9] It is the master who commits the deed which causes the horse to have to go to battle in the first place. The master's adventures with his lady cause the battle.

> Iva lidiar en campo el cavallo faziente
> porque forçó la dueña el su señor valiente:
> (237 a-b)

Love, not lack of fear, is blamed for having brought about the pride which causes the fall. Furthermore, it is the man's love

affair but the horse's pride. Pride causes the horse to pay the price of another person's love:

> Desque salió del campo non valié una cermeña;
> a arar lo pusieron e a traer la leña,
> a vezes a la noria, a vezes a la aceña:
> escota el sobervio el amor de la dueña.
> (241 a-d)

The archpriest sums up the moral of the story briefly in stanza 245 quoted earlier, but does not mention love in that stanza. The focus is entirely on the temporary nature of pride and strength, the qualities of life that generally disappear with youth. This interpretation is clearly in keeping with the point which the archpriest makes about the sin of pride. The underlying message, however, has to do both with Love's power and also with deceit. The master takes the horse into a battle that is the result of his own deceitful behavior toward a woman. The cause for which they are fighting is not a worthy one, but the result of the master's self-indulgence. In the end, pride pays the price (241 d).

As before, except for the brief summary of the archpriest's interpretation of the tale, there is no transition between the concluding stanza of the section on pride and the archpriest's next accusations, which deal with the sin of greed. After his general remarks about the biblical command to share one's wealth, he accuses Love of praying for wealth and then refusing to respond to the needs of the poor. The archpriest compares Love to the wolf who has a bone lodged in his throat from eating a goat. The wolf asks a crane to pull the bone out, and promises her a reward

for doing so. When the crane successfully removes the bone, the wolf refuses to keep his promise to pay, telling her to go away and be grateful that he did not swallow her head while she had it in his mouth (252 - 256).

Ian Michael notes that according to its classification in the Motif Index, this tale generally exemplifies ingratitude. He goes on to say that "Juan Ruiz goes to great lengths to try and adjust it to his purpose".[10] The moral of ingratitude is certainly obvious. However, the focus of the interpretation which the archpriest directs to Don Amor deals primarily with greed rather than ingratitude:

> Bien assí tú lo fazes, agora que estás lleno
> de pan e de dineros que forcest de lo ajeno;
> non quieres dar al pobre un poco de centeno,
> mas assí t' secarás como rocío e feno.
> (255 a-d)

His point is not that Love is ungrateful for the wealth he has attained, but that he is too greedy to share any of it. When he was needy and God provided, Love gladly took all that he could, but now he refuses to obey God's commandment to care for the poor. Even the risk of judgment does not deter him from being like the wolf (246 - 251).

The thrust of this portion of the narrative and the final words of interpretation which the archpriest directs to Don Amor imply the third message. He accuses Love of being responsible for men's greed, but the tale that he tells is associated with

ingratitude more commonly than greed. The third message is about deceit and is implied by the archpriest's final statement:

> En fazer bien al malo cosa non aprovecha:
> omne desgradecido bienfecho nunca pecha;
> el buen conocimiento mal omne lo desecha:
> el bien que omne le faze diz que es por su derecha.
> (256 a-d)

The wolf promises a reward, but does not pay. With the slight twist of meaning, Juan Ruiz shifts the burden of responsibility from the wolf to the crane. From this standpoint he focuses not on the wolf's greed, but on the crane's imprudence. She should have known better than to allow herself to be deceived into trying to do something good for someone who is evil. This is clearly a tale of many morals.

To illustrate how Love is the cause of lust, the archpriest tells three tales. The first is the biblical tale of David and Uriah (258 - 259). This version is quite brief and at first seems to show primarily how David's love for Bathsheba caused him to sin and then suffer the consequences of his sin for the rest of his life. However, the final stanza adds a different dimension:

> Fueron por la loxuria cinco nobles cibdades
> quemadas e destruidas, las tres por sus maldades,
> las dos non por su culpa, mas por las vezindades:
> "por malas vezindades se pierden eredades".
> (260 a-d)

The next line makes his point clear: " No t' quiero por vezino nin me vengas tan presto!" (261 a). His focus on the fact that the innocent are sometimes victims of their neighbors' folly calls

to mind the tale of the horse who paid the price of his master's sin.

With no introduction, the archpriest begins the tale known as "Virgil in the basket" (261 - 268). Thompson classifies this tale under the motif "Deception into Humiliating position: Humiliated or baffled lovers." It seems to have very little to do with the role of Love in making men lust, and much more to do with deceit. Virgil's lover deceives him and traps him in a basket hung over the wall of her tower. In retaliation, he uses his sorcery to put out all the fires of Rome but one:

> assí que los romanos, fasta la criatura,
> non podién aver fuego, por su desaventura,
> si non lo encendían dentro en la natura
> de la mujer mesquina; otro non les atura:
> (263 a-d)

He then turns the Tiber to copper. The archpriest lays the blame on Love for whatever ill comes of such tricks and compares Love's actions to the wizard's trickery:

> todo el suelo del río de la cibdat de Roma,
> Tiberio, agua cabdal, que muchas aguas toma,
> fízol suelo de cobre: reluze más que goma;
> a dueñas tu loxuria desta guisa las doma.
> (266 a-d)

The last portion of this tale tells of the lady's attempt to trap Virgil on a deadly staircase. His magical foresight saves him from death, and he does not return to see her.

It is difficult to follow the line of reasoning and to determine the exact function of the tale of Virgil at any level.

In fact some critics simply do not include these episodes in their consideration of the tales. The meaning expressed by the archpriest to Don Amor in the closing stanzas is as follows:

> Assí por la loxuria es verdaderamente
> el mundo escarnido e muy triste la gente.
>
> De muchos a que matas non sé uno que sanes:
> quantos en tu loxuria son grandes varraganes
> mátanse a sí mismos, los locos alvardanes.
> (268 c - 269 c)

However, the meaning implied by the tale seems somewhat different. The lady is imprudent when she tries to trick Virgil; he outwits her, and the deceiver is deceived. The archpriest states that Don Amor is to blame, since his influence causes lust. Lust drives people to deeds that do them great harm. Love makes people self-destructive.

The next tale provides an example of how lust brings one's downfall through self-destruction. An eagle, whose moulted feathers are prized by hunters, is killed with an arrow made from his own feather (270 - 275). The motif classification implies that the tale has more to do with misfortune with oneself to blame than lust. Ian Michael remarks that the link between this tale and the idea of lust is that lechers destroy themselves by the internal force of sexual overindulgence.[11] Sobejano also gives this interpretation and notes the difficulty of discovering the logical connection between Juan Ruiz's accusations and the ejemplo that he chooses to illustrate it.[12] However, had the eagle been more prudent in his watch from his high perch, the hunter would

never have surprised him. The cause of destruction is indeed internal, but it is the eagle's lack of prudence in the face of known danger rather than some inner force that brings him to his doom.

None of these three tales speaks specifically to the problem introduced by the archpriest, nor do they reinforce each other in addressing a single issue. The archpriest does provide some connection to lust and Don Amor on the level of the narration. Yet on the level of interaction between the text and the reader we can see a strong link between the tales and the ideas of prudence and deceit. In one sense these tales are the archpriest's commentary on the problems of being in love, in another sense they are his commentary on the problems caused to the world by Love's power. Many of the descriptions of lovers or of the priest himself are reminiscent of the descriptions of the effects of love in The Dove's Neckring or the Roman de la Rose. According to these works, being in love makes people do unusual or improper things. On one level, the archpriest expresses anger toward Don Amor. On a second level, he voices his anger or frustration over the effects of being in love. Finally, on a third level he deals with the moral issue defined by the seven deadly sins.

The next section identifies Love with envy. The tale which illustrates this sin is the story of the jay that is so envious of the peacock's feathers that he strips himself and wears the peacock's showy plumes (285 - 290). The motif classification of this tale indicates a related but slightly different aspect of its

moral: "Wise and Unwise Conduct: Presumption of the Lowly." Ian Michael points out that the tale also exemplifies vainglory.[13] As with other tales in this section, the archpriest leaves the interpretation of the moral significance of the tale open-ended. His opening remarks to Don Amor introduce the idea of Love's irrational jealousy and anger. This emotion even more than lust clouds the decision-making process and leads to self-destruction. He compares Love's actions to those of fish that swim into the net:

> Cúntet' como acaece en la ret a los peces:
>
> entras en la pelea, non puedes end salir,
> estás flaco e sin fuerça, no t' puedes refertir:
> nin la puedes vencer nin puedes end foír;
> estórvate pecado, fázete allí morir.
> (279 d - 280 d)

Envy causes people to deceive in order to gain something to which they are not entitled. As in the preceding section, the priest refers to the effects commonly associated with being in love. Love makes the lover want to show off and makes him envious of those more likely to win a lady's favor than he. In the process of trying to be what he is not, the lover imprudently risks losing what he has. Of course, the stated warning is that envy is a pecado mortal, and this is the moral side of the priest's interpretation. Zahareas notes the double meaning:

> In context, however, the Archpriest is a moral, indignant story-teller who, nevertheless, tells his tale to Don Amor not with one, but with two voices: one is disparaging with the cutting edge of

> contemptuous invective—it is the stern voice of moral superiority over sinful degeneracy; the other is frustrated by his repeated failures as an apprentice of love to seduce women.[14]

The next sin is gluttony, to which the archpriest attributes the fall of Adam and Lot's incest with his daughters. To illustrate the sin he tells the tale of the lion and the horse in which a greedy lion tries to trick a fat horse. When the lion commands the horse to kiss his hand in acknowledgement of his sovereignty, the horse first asks the lion to remove a nail from his hoof. Thinking he will get an easy meal, the lion attacks the horse, but dies when the horse kicks him. The tale ends when the gluttonous horse dies from eating poisonous grasses (298 - 303).

Once again the ambiguity comes from the apparent inconsistency of the tale's most obvious moral intent and the application of the tale to a particular situation. Citing Hippocrates as his authority, the archpriest sums up the relationship of gluttony to love:

> El comer sin mesura e la grand venternía,
> otrossí mucho vino con mucha beverría,
> más mata que cuchillo: Ipocrás lo dezía;
> tú dizes: "quien bien come bien faze garçonía".
> (303 a-d)

Until we reach these lines in the text, the interpretation most likely to be associated with this tale exemplifies deceit rather than gluttony. The lion is a victim of his own deceit against the horse. The greedy lion intends to trick the horse into approaching by pretending to be something that he is not, and

instead he is attacked by the horse. The horse is a victim of self-deception when he succumbs to gluttony. Stith Thompson's classification for the tale, "Deceptions into self-injury", bears out the emphasis on deceit.

The tale of the lion who kills himself with anger (sometimes known as "Ass insults dying lion") illustrates the sins of vainglory and anger. A proud lion has ruled the other animals cruelly since his youth. Now that he is old and weak, the animals that he has mistreated come to insult and injure him. Finally, when the cowardly ass kicks him, the lion is so overcome with anger that he kills himself with his own claws (311 - 316).

The opening lines to this section provide a link between Don Amor and the lion in the tale:

> Ira e vana gloria traes, en el mundo no ay tan maña:
> más orgullo e más brío tienes que toda España;
> si non se faze lo tuyo tomas ira e grand saña:
> enojo e malquerencia anda ena tu compaña.
> (304 a-d)

The archpriest has complained bitterly of Love's unfair treatment of those who seek to serve him. In the same way that the lion has not shown prudence in his rule of the animals, Love is not prudent in his rule over lovers. The influence of Love's power may cause a person to be guilty of the sins of vainglory and anger; this interpretation of the tale is in keeping with the complaints that the archpriest has directed to Don Amor thus far. The tale takes on the flavor of a warning to Love, however, if the implications of the lion's unjust reign apply to the rule of Don Amor.

The motif of this tale is "Unfavorable traits of character: Cowardice." Vainglory is mentioned only briefly and the priest does not develop its relationship to the story of the lion. The focus of the tale for the archpriest is not the ass's cowardice, but the lion's uncontrollable anger at getting his just rewards. He states two interpretations of the tale in the text:

> la ira e vana gloria diéronle mal galardón.
>
> El omne que tiene estado, onra e grande poder,
> lo que para sí non quiere non lo deve a otros fazer,
> que mucho aína se puede todo su poder perder,
> e lo qu' él fizo a otros dellos tal puede aver.
> (315 d - 316 d)

These are also the closing lines of the section. The archpriest now begins his comments on Don Amor's responsibility for the sin of sloth, which, according to the poet, goes hand in hand with hypocrisy: "Otrossí con acidia traes ipocresía." (319 a). However, the introductory lines indicate that one of the archpriest's primary concerns is once again the matter of deceit: "engañas todo el mundo con palabra fermosa;" (320 b). By far the longest and certainly the most complex of the tales used by Juan Ruiz, this tale is a tangle of deceits.

A wolf sees a fox steal a cock and demands that she abandon it. The wolf, condemning in another what he does himself, takes the case before the judge, Don Ximio. With his lawyer the greyhound, who is the mortal enemy of the fox, he eloquently pleads his case in court and asks that the judge have the fox put to death for her crime. The fox asks for a lawyer to defend her,

and the judge delays the trial until his return twenty days later so that she can locate one. In the meantime the fox engages a mastiff, enemy of the wolf, to defend her. The mastiff begins his arguments by stating that the wolf has accused the fox of crimes that he commits himself, and therefore his accusations should be disqualified. Furthermore, the mastiff declares that the wolf should be condemned and excommunicated for keeping a concubine, the Mastina. After hearing the mastiff's case, Don Ximio sets a date for the sentencing, and leaves for his home, accompanied by the lawyers and others who try without success to sway his decision. When the court reconvenes, the parties are given one last chance to resolve their differences on their own, but they refuse. After complimenting both the wolf and the mastiff on the presentation of their cases, he states that the mastiff's first point is a decisive one, but that the mastiff presented the matter of excommunication in error and it must be thrown out of court. His explanation of the point of law which the mastiff has overlooked follows. The judge then declares that the fox and the wolf are both guilty, by their own admission, of the same crime and therefore the wolf has no right to bring the fox to court. He sets the fox free with a warning not to steal from her neighbor and admonishes the lawyers to learn from their experience (321 - 371).

The four characters involved in the legal proceedings seek personal gain by the deceitful manipulation of the legal system. The fox does demonstrate her astuteness in asking for a lawyer, a

move which gains her time to put together her case. Both the fox and the wolf choose their lawyers carefully in order to instill fear in the other party. The wisdom of the judge prevails, however, and both parties are the victims of their own deceits.

The archpriest berates Don Amor not only for encouraging sloth but also for taking advantage of people by filling their heads with evil ideas in idle moments. Like the fox who appears to accept the judge's warning not to steal cockerels from her neighbor but says under her breath, "Ella diz que non le tiene, mas furtarle ha la gallina," Don Amor slyly suggests his evil plans (366 d). The priest moves quickly to the idea of deceit and compares Don Amor to the wolf who accuses others of his own faults and seeks to lure the unsuspecting into his trap:

> Tal eres como el Lobo: retraes lo que fazes,
> estrañas a los otros el lodo en que yazes;
> eres mal enemigo a todos quantos plazes:
> fablas con grand simpleza porque muchos enlazes.
>
> A obra de piadat tú nunca paras mientes,
> non visitas los presos nin quieres ver dolientes
> sinon solteros, sanos, mancebos e valientes.
> Si loçanas encuentras, fáblasles entre dientes.
> (372 - 373)

The classification of this tale is "Justice and Injustice." A person's opinion of justice, however, depends on their point of view. Neither the fox nor the wolf see the wisdom of the judge's decision. One message to the audience of the Libro de buen amor is that the deceitful plans of the animals and their lawyers brought them no gain, partly because they tried to win too much

and overstepped the bounds of reason. The moral interpretation, that sloth and hypocrisy are dangerous to the soul, plays a minor role in comparison to the message about deceit that is inherent in the tale. I agree with Ian Michael that there is no exact parallel between the tale and the events described in the narrative of the archpriest.[15] However, it does not necessarily follow that the tale is poorly conceived or badly told, or that it was added as an afterthought. The tale does support the overall intent of this section of the Libro de buen amor.

This marks the end of the section on the seven deadly sins. A clear pattern in relationship of the tales to the text emerges upon recognition of the underlying concept of deceit. Virtually every tale in the Libro de buen amor to this point deals with the consequences of deceit. The deceptions and the types of victims vary, and there are several cases of self-deception. The pattern is too carefully contrived to have been simply an accident. Furthermore, the messages communicated by these tales have a direct relationship to the messages of the tales told in the context of dialogue, as will be shown in chapter IV.

The transition to the archpriest's closing arguments in his case against Don Amor at first seems abrupt. With only one stanza connecting it to the preceding long tale, he begins the parody of the canonical hours (374 - 387). However, he continues to develop the idea of hypocrisy, which is an important motif in the final tale of the seven deadly sins section. A link between the

two sections of the argument occurs in stanza 388 when he mentions acidia: "Cona acidia traes estos males atantos, // muchos otros pecados, antojos e espantos. (388 ab)" The final tale narrated by the archpriest is the Aesopic fable of the frog and the mole. The frog convinces the mole that since she loves him, he should trust her to rescue him from his flooded cave. The mole agrees, but soon finds that the frog has tricked him. As they struggle in the water, a kite flies down, carries them both to his nest and eats them (407 - 414).

Once again, the archpriest emphasizes deceit, this time focusing on the idea of choosing one's alliances carefully. Had the mole been more prudent, he would have been wary of the frog's promise. Instead, the frog deceives the mole by offering to help him, the imprudent mole trusts the frog, and both perish. Similarly, Love causes people to lose control of their sense of judgment and be subject to such errors. The priest closes the tale by stating that the kite "al mur e a la rana levólos al su nido; // comiólos a entramos, no l' tiraron la fambre" (413 d - 414 a). Corominas makes an excellent point regarding these final lines of the tale and the understatement which communicates the indifference of the kite:

> El hecho careció de toda importancia para el milano, no fue para el más que un pequeño suceso cotidiano, repetidísimo, como lo es el desastre comparable de sus víctimas para el voracísimo don Amor. Pero esta catástrofe tiene una gravedad horrenda para las víctimas. El tono externamente indiferente en que hace el poeta esta observación, terminando con ella

> concisamente el cuento, es intencionado, y no hace más que subrayar el patetismo del fondo.[16]

The archpriest's outward expression of anger is based on the fact that Love through acidia takes advantage of people and leads them into sin. Once he entraps them, Love turns his back, indifferent to their plight and the severity of their punishment. We also understand that as before, he blames Don Amor first of all for falling in love, and then for being utterly unsuccessful in spite of all that he suffers because of love. The moral issue, in addition to Love's relationship to the mortal sins, is the effect of the emotions caused by Love. Love clouds one's sense of judgement and sets people in such a state of mind that they no longer have any regard even for God:

> los necios e las necias que una vez enlazas,
> en tal guisa los travas con tus fuertes mordazas,
> que non an de Dios miedo nin de sus amenazas:
> el diablo los lieva presos en tus tenazas;
> (415 a-d)

As with the frog and the mole, both the deceiver and the deceived pay the price of their folly where Love is concerned:

> al uno e al otro eres destruïdor;
> tan bien al engañado como al engañador;
> como el mur e la rana perecen, o peor;
> eres mal enemigo: fázeste amador.
> (416 a-d)

Love makes people deceitful and makes them victims of deceit.

Stanzas 417 - 420 are a harsh condemnation of false speech used to deceive, and a warning against undeserved trust of the

wolf in sheep's clothing. The priest states the two warnings distinctly. On the one hand people should be prudent in judging the truth of what they hear. On the other, they should take care to speak truthfully:

> Non es para buen omne en creer de ligero
> todo lo que l' dixieren, péselo bien primero;
> non conviene al bueno que sea lisonjero:
> en el bien dezir sea firme e verdadero.
> (419 a-d)

The last two stanzas of the section add an ironic twist that seems to negate much of his invective against Love and prove the truth of his warnings about deceit:

> Mucho más te diría, salvo que non me atrevo,
>
> porque de muchas dueñas malquerido sería,
> e mucho garçon loco de mí porfaçaría;
> por tanto non te digo el diezmo que podría:
> pues cállat e callemos; Amor: ¡vete tu vía!".
> (421 d - 422 d)

If the archpriest truly wished to destroy the power of Don Amor, then it would not matter to him what others thought. His concern with both the image that he presents to the dueñas and his reputation among men not only indicates that he is himself under the power of Love. It also emphasizes the ambiguity of all that he has said, suggesting that other meanings are conveyed by tales besides those that fall within strictly moral guidelines.

In a beautiful play on the idea of the power of words, Don Amor begins his response to the archpriest:

"Acipreste, sañudo non seas, yo te ruego,
non digas mal de amor en verdat nin en juego:
que a las vezes poca agua faze abaxar grand fuego,

por poco maldezir se pierde grand amor,
de pequeña pelea nace un grand rencor,
por mala dicha pierde vassallo su señor;
la fabla siempre buena faz de bueno mijor.
(423 b - 424 d)

After describing the qualities that are desirable in a woman, Don Amor begins to explain to the archpriest how he should go about winning the love of such a woman. His methods include learning the deceits that the priest has just condemned. He suggests, for example, that the lover should promise a woman whatever is necessary, whether he is able and willing to give it or not. He should employ a messenger who knows how to lie well, and he should not be lazy in the pursuit of love.

The final suggestion serves as the introduction to the first of the three tales told by Don Amor—the tale of the two lazy men who want to marry the same woman. Each thinking to outdo the other, they brag on their laziness and what it has cost them. When they have finished, the woman refuses them both and sends them on their way (457 - 467). Critics agree that this tale is based either on a fabliau, or on a popular tale in that vein; however, the grotesque humor which prevails obscures somewhat the moral value of the story. Ian Michael notes the irony that this tale could have been used to illustrate the archpriest's arguments about the evils of sloth, one of the sins which Don Amor supposedly causes.[17] In his denunciation of Love, the archpriest

states that sloth brings about hypocrisy and therefore the downfall of mankind. In Don Amor's answer, sloth is not a virtue either; however, the virtues in question are the qualities of a good lover, not moral virtues. As he warns the archpriest, a slothful man cannot hope to win a woman.

A subtle change takes place in Juan Ruiz's use of this popular tale. The reader understands the point or moral of the story, that laziness doesn't pay, whether the tale is treated as a fabliau, meant only to entertain, or whether is is used as an exemplum, intended to illustrate a point. The change occurs in the story's application to the present situation. The moral falls well within the framework of beliefs accepted by the medieval society in which the tale circulated. We know, in fact, that this tale, or a version of it, was used by preachers of the day. We also know that similar stories circulated as fabliaux.[18] The problem of ambiguity and the development of the medieval church's criteria for determining the appropriateness of literature like the popular tales have already been discussed. Juan Ruiz creates an ambiguous context in the Libro de buen amor by not using the moral as an instructive device to teach right living, but rather telling it through the character of Don Amor as a lesson on how to become a successful lover. Based on historical information about the tale and the period, we assume that the implied audience addressed by Juan Ruiz knew the "right" lesson . They would also have seen the humor and irony in its presentation. The moral conveyed by the tale, when interpreted "appropriately", is that

laziness is wrong. Used by Love, it serves as one step in a lesson on how to deceive women. The prudent reader discerns both the moral and the lesson.

Don Amor's second tale is the famous Pitas Payas episode, which serves to further develop the idea introduced by the last tale, that a lover must not be lazy. This time Don Amor emphasizes keeping a woman rather than winning her. As he says: "mujer, molino e uerta siempre quieren el uso," (472 b) and "mujer mucho seguida siempre anda loçana" (473 c). The protagonist of this tale is Pitas Payas, a painter. One month after his marriage he decides to return to France for a visit. In order to keep his new wife chaste he paints a lamb on her stomach. During the two years that he is away, the young woman takes a lover. Upon hearing of Pitas Payas' return, the lover paints a ram in the place of the lamb that has long since disappeared. The woman answers her husband's accusations sharply, chiding him for his long absence (474 - 484).

In the beginning of this tale and in the first remarks at its conclusion, Don Amor directs his comments to the would-be lover. The usual development of the fabliau focuses on the woman's infidelity and her husband's reaction.[19] Instead of blaming the woman for her infidelity and warning the archpriest to beware the wiles of women, Love presents the tale as a lesson on how to keep a woman. The focus shifts from the woman's unfaithfulness to the man's responsibility in paying close attention to her. According to Don Amor, women want to receive gifts. Whether little or much,

the important thing is to send gifts often:

Otrossí quando vieres a quien usa con ella,
quier sea suyo o non, fáblal por amor della;
si podieres, dal' algo: non le ayas querella,
ca estas cosas pueden a la mujer traella.

Por poquilla de cosa del tu aver que l' dieres,
servirte ha lealmente, fará lo que quesieres;
que poco o que mucho dal' cada que podieres:
fará por los dineros todo quanto pedieres.
(488 a - 489 d)

These stanzas end the Pitas Payas episode and introduce the section which deals with the properties of money. After his comments on money, Don Amor returns to the theme of persistence with women, assuring the archpriest that even the hardest woman will soften with time:

Muy blanda es el agua e da en piedra muy dura:
muchas vegadas dando faze grand cavadura;
por grand uso el rudo sabe grande letura;
mujer mucho seguida olvida la cordura.
(526 a-d)

Ian Michael asserts that the one function of the Pitas Payas tale is to "exemplify the risks of negligence in love," and that Juan Ruiz was obliged to "adjust its emphasis and its moral lesson to conform with its function," since the usual focus was on the woman's infidelity.[20] I agree with Michael's assessment of the two ideas juxtaposed in the presentation of this tale; however, I believe that the ambiguity of the moral lesson vs. the amatory lesson is quite intentional. Don Amor relates the tales to teach Juan Ruiz the basic rules of being a good lover. Learning to

deceive both with words and actions is one of the most important skills recommended by Don Amor. In addition to a lesson on infidelity and persistence, the Pitas Payas episode is a story of deceit and imprudence. The husband makes a poor choice in leaving his young wife for so long, and she deceives him in spite of his precautions. In the end, the wife's cleverness with words saves her from paying for her unfaithfulness.

The final section of Don Amor's response has to do with how the lover should behave, and begins with a warning to avoid drinking too much wine. To illustrate the dangers of indulging in wine, Don Amor tells the tale of the hermit who becomes a drunkard. In the tale, the devil tempts an innocent hermit to drink wine for the first time. Once he is drunk, the devil persuades him to get a rooster and hens to help him keep track of the days. The hermit is tempted to rape a woman after watching the rooster with the hens. In order to avoid discovery, he kills the woman; and when her body is found, the authorities condemn him to death. Wine sets the hermit on the path to destruction (529 - 543).

From the beginning we note that Don Amor uses some of the same examples and lines of reasoning that the archpriest used in his denunciation of Love. Stanford Bergstrom notes the irony of this section, in that Love advocates Christian conduct as a part of his advice to the archpriest.[21] In his discussion of gluttony, the archpriest has accused Don Amor of causing Lot to sin by drinking too much:

Feziste por la gula a Lot, noble burgés,
bever tanto que yogo con sus fijas, por vez,
a fazer tu fornicio; ca do mucho vino es,
luego es la loxuria e todo mal después.
(296 a-d)

Now Don Amor gives the same example to illustrate his point about the evils of wine:

Guárdate, sobre todo, mucho vino bever,
que el vino fizo a Lot con sus fijas bolver,
e en vergüeña del mundo, en saña de Dios caer.
(528 b-c)

Don Amor gives a further interesting twist to the ideas presented by the archpriest in the section on sins by now relating three of the mortal sins directly to indulgence in wine:

él estando con vino, vido cómo s' juntava
el gallo con las fembras, en ello s' deleitava:
cobdició fer fornicio, desque con vino estava.

Fue con él la cobdicia raíz de todos males:
luxuria e sobervia; tres pecados mortales;
luego el omicidio: estos pecados tales
traye el vino mucho a los descumunales.
(539 b - 540 d)

But he shifts immediately from the topic of spiritual values to a discussion of the ill effects of wine on the process of winning a woman's love.

For the third time, and in the most complex fashion, Don Amor subverts one perception of truth with another. In this instance he has used the archpriest's own tactics to make his point and undermine the very premise on which the archpriest based a portion of his invective. Many of the statements made by Don Amor could

have been the archpriest's. There even seems to be a "momentary shift in Don Amor's position from that of an instructor in amatory skill to that of the medieval preacher."[22] The example of the hermit's demise teaches a commonly recognized moral. Since it comes early in this section of Don Amor's speech, the spiritual interpretation is the first to come to mind. The remarks that follow the tale suggest alternate ways of viewing it and cast doubt on the validity of its message by introducing an element of ambiguity.

Love ends his remarks by admonishing the archpriest to work hard to achieve his goal. The archpriest then visits with the wife of Don Amor, Doña Venus. She too instructs him in the art of love, and particularly in the matter of winning the heart of Doña Endrina, but no folktales occur in this section of the Libro de buen amor. In the episode about Don Melón and Doña Endrina, which follows, several tales are told, but they occur in the context of dialogue and will be discussed in the next chapter. Immediately after the Endrina episode, the archpriest addresses women who might find themselves tempted to take a lover. He relates a single tale as a warning to women to be on their guard against men.

This relatively complex tale comprises the third narrative setting. A lion recovers from a headache and calls the animals together to celebrate. The foolish ass brays loudly and angers the lion, but escapes when the lion tries to kill him. After the lion has calmed down he sends the fox to call the ass back to the

party. The fox deceives the ass by telling him that the lion had really been pleased with his "music". The ass believes the fox and angers the lion again with his loud braying. This time the lion kills the ass. Admonishing him to watch the carcass as he watches the sheep, the lion leaves it in the care of the wolf, who steals the heart and ears. When the lion returns and questions the wolf about the missing parts, the wolf replies that the ass was born that way, and that was the reason he made such a fool of himself in the first place (892 - 906).

The archpriest first cautions women not to be like the ass without heart and ears. They should not succumb to the deceits of men at all, but if they have already been victims:

> la que por aventura es o fue engañada
> guárdese que non torne al mal otra vegada:
> de coraçón e orejas non quiera ser menguada,
> en ajena cabeça sea bien castigada;
> (905 a-d)

Michael sees this warning as the only connecting bridge between the fable and the narrative of Juan Ruiz.[23] However, the next verse clearly provides another point of contact. Drawing on the second portion of the tale, the archpriest further warns women not to be deceived by talk, as the lion was deceived by the wolf's words:

> e en muchas engañadas castigo e seso tomen,
> non quieran el amor falso, loco riso non assomen:
> ya oístes dezir que asno de muchos, lobos lo comen
> —non me maldigan algunos que por esto se concomen—;
> (906 a-d)

The unstated part of the lesson taught by the lion's mistake relates to prudence. Corominas has pointed out the irony in the lion's instructions to the wolf:

> Mandó el león al lobo, con sus uñas parejas
> Que lo guardasse todo, mijor que las ovejas.
> Quanto el león traspuso una o dos callejas
> el coraçón el lobo comió e las orejas.
> (901 a-d)

The wolf deceives the lion with clever words, but the lion is the victim of his own imprudence in leaving behind so cunning a creature as the wolf.[24]

This tale's classification is "Deceptions: Thefts and cheats: Thief escapes detection." As Michael says, the emphasis shifts from the lesson about thefts and cheats, which is generally associated with the tale, to its other lesson about foolishly repeating the same mistake. The archpriest does not omit either lesson, however, and mentions both in his warning. The connection between the wolf's trickery and deceitful speech is of particular interest as it relates to the pattern that we see in Juan Ruiz's use of folktales to communicate dual or ambiguous messages. The idea of deceit occurs in both sections of the tale and between several pairs of characters. The fox deliberately deceives the ass with flattery. The fact that the ass believes the false compliments is self-deception and leads to his destruction. The wolf deceives the lion, who is imprudent in trusting the wolf with his possessions. The archpriest addresses women tempted to

succumb to love, but he undermines the lesson by his own amorous pursuits.

The final group of tales told in a narrative context consists of three stories that are part of the narrative material that surrounds the fictive autobiography. All three are tales which various scholars have studied extensivly. The first comes early in the text and is the tale of the dispute between the Greeks and the Romans. There are as many interpretations of this tale as there are of the Libro de buen amor. In fact, many feel that it illustrates the message which Juan Ruiz seeks to convey in his book. To mention a few of the interpretations of this tale, Zahareas feels that this is the central didactic passage of the text, and that it identifies the four ways of understanding the Libro de buen amor. The four ways are that the book is meant to entertain, that it has artistic qualities, that the book and the author should be judged by their good intentions, and that a good or subtle understanding of the book can serve as a guide for those who insist on pursuing worldly love.[25] Deyermond classifies the tale as parody, and indicates four subjects of the parody: formal academic disputation and university degrees, sign language, translatio studii, and scriptural exegesis.[26] Sara Sturm states that the tale, unlike others in the Libro de buen amor, has the specific function to illustrate the misinterpretation which the reader should avoid, in addition to its function as a humorous piece.[27] The tale does set the tone for the book, and in many ways gives the reader suggestions for its possible

interpretations. Furthermore, Juan Ruiz refers to the idea of guiding the reader in the proper interpretation of the work not only in the preliminary sections of the text, but later in the narrative as well.

The tale of the dispute between the Greeks and the Romans comes in the preliminary material just after the poems in praise of the Virgin. The Romans ask the Greeks to give them the laws, but the Greeks refuse. In a contest to settle the dispute, a Roman ruffian and Greek philosopher debate by using sign language. On the basis of the debate the Greeks decide that the Romans are worthy recipients of the laws. However, they base their decision on a mutual misunderstanding of the signs (44 - 70). In a manner typical of the entire work, Juan Ruiz deliberately presents the tale and a possible interpretation in such a way that the conclusions are ambiguous. No clear cut explanation suffices to deal with so complex a narrative situation.

The various interpretations mentioned above indicate the numerous ways of reading this tale. It can be a reference to the way that the reader should interpret the book. The fact that one of the ideas developed by Juan Ruiz in this section is interpretation, lends favor to this analysis. It can be understood at face value as a humorous story to lighten the reader's heart and make him laugh. On another level it can be a statement about the power of God to use all things for his own will, even the seemingly shady side of men and literature. The manner in which Juan Ruiz develops this tale and discusses its

significance brings up the matter of deceit. The author may deliberately deceive the reader by creating ambiguous outcomes for the narrative. If the circumstances are not clearly defined in terms of their moral or intellectual significance, then even the author's stated interpretation of the tale comes into question. The reader must be prudent and interpret astutely in order to draw the fullest sense from the material without being deceived by lies that have the appearance of truth.

The second tale in this section is part of the archpriest's preliminary remarks on human nature. He discusses at some length people's need for love and the effects which love has on them. In the opening stanzas the author defends astrology as a science that is not incompatible with the teachings of the church. He justifies astrologers and their observations by defining astrological occurences as simply another manifestation of the nature of God, another type of sign from God. The tale places emphasis on signs and the idea that signs can deceive.

In the tale, a king calls on five astrologers to prophesy at the birth of a prince. Each gives a gloomy picture of the prince's future, but the exact way in which the baby will meet his foretold death is different according to each one of the astrologers. Angrily, the king commands that the wise men be imprisoned until their prophesies are proved true or false. A bizarre set of circumstances proves that all five of the astrologers have predicted accurately the manner of the prince's

death. The king releases them, since his faith in astrology is restored (123 - 139).

The key to this passage is in Juan Ruiz's comments in stanzas 142-150. He first states his belief that God controls the universe and has created the laws by which the universe functions and by which people live. The second part of the message is that God may also choose to disregard some of the laws which he himself created. Coming back to the human dilemma, men and women "should" follow the laws of God. But which ones? The laws of nature and mankind's natural inclinations, or the spiritual laws which forbid people to be true to their nature? There are other types of laws. The laws of the church, the laws of the king, those of a master for his household. But the master or king may choose to overlook or not enforce those laws for which he is responsible, as Juan Ruiz notes in his remarks following the tale.

The message of the tale on one level is that human nature will prevail, regardless of the precautions taken to confine it, and that this nature is foretold in the stars. In a spiritual sense, it implies that God's purpose will triumph regardless. The outcome of the tale on this level is ironic. With regard to something so absolute as death, the logical assumption is that only one possibility or prediction will come true. The fact that all five are fulfilled verifies the idea of ambiguity in truth. Juan Ruiz describes a deceit of a more intellectual nature, but the effect that it has is the same. The king is deceived by the truth and fails to make appropriate choices in the beginning of

the tale. The fulfillment of the prophesies resolves the conflict and the outcome of the tale is that the king restores the astrologers to their positions of honor. This act of restoration is another contradiction to the strictest norms accepted by the church, which did not condone the counsel of astrologers.[28] Juan Ruiz justifies the action by identifying the signs of the stars as legitimate manifestations of occurences which take place according to the laws of nature and God:

> Bien assí Nuestro Señor, quando el cielo crió,
> puso en él los sus signos, e planetas ordenó,
> los sus poderíos ciertos e juizios otorgó,
> pero en sí mayor poder retuvo que les non dio;
> (148 a-d)

He says that the stars only reflect the events of the world, yet many of his comments before and after the tale would seem to indicate that he really feels that the stars influence people's nature in more than simply a coincidental sense:

> Creo ser verdaderos,
> segund natural curso, los dichos estrelleros.
>
> Porque creas el curso d'estos signos atales
> dezirt' he un juizio de cinco naturales
> (127 c - 128 b)
>
> Non sé astrología nin só ende maestro,
> nin sé astralabio más que buei de cabestro;
> mas porque cada día veo passar aquesto,
> por aquesso lo digo; otrossí veo esto:
>
> muchos nacen en Venus, que los más de su vida
> es amar las mujeres,
> (151 a - 152 b)
>
> en este signo atal creo que yo nací:
> (153 a)

As in so many passages of his book, deceit is the key factor. After insisting that love is an essential element of human nature Juan Ruiz tells how love itself deceives by making things seem better than they really are:

> Una tacha le fallo al amor poderoso,
> la qual, dueñas, a vos yo descobrir non oso;
> mas, porque no m' tengades por dezidor medroso,
> es ésta: que el amor siempre fabla mintroso;
>
> ca, segund vos he dicho en la otra conseja,
> lo que en sí es torpe con amor bien semeja,
> tiene por noble cosa lo que non val arveja:
> lo que semeja no es, oya bien tu oreja;
> (161 a - 162 d)

This leaves man in a quandry as to the right choices to make concerning love, if the closing stanzas of the section are true:

> Bien atal es amor, que da palabra llena:
> toda cosa que dize parece mucho buena;
> non es todo cantar quanto ruido suena:
> por vos descobrir esto, dueña, non aya pena;
>
> dize: "Por las verdades se pierden los amigos,
> e por las non dezir se fazen desamigos":
> assí entendet sano los proverbios antigos
> e nunca vos creades loores de enemigos.
> (164 a - 165 d)

The final tale, the song of the clerics of Talavera, occurs in the concluding stanzas of the work. Scholars often debate the significance of this tale, and its relation to the text is not clear. It is based on goliardic sources, but the version in the Libro de buen amor is incomplete. When the clerics receive word that they must give up their practice of keeping lovers, there is general dismay at the prospect. Several lines recall the tale of

the astrologers and the idea of human nature. The clerics think of appealing to the king, who would understand their plight, since he also keeps a mistress. The outcome of the order is uncertain, for Juan Ruiz tells us that the clerics appealed the matter, and there the manuscript ends. No reconciliation of the fictional autobiography or the tale of the clerics is given in the Libro de buen amor.

When we begin to look at the messages that are communicated by Juan Ruiz through his careful use of both the content and the context of the tales in the Libro de buen amor, a clear pattern emerges. In the three storytelling episodes in the narrative context which are part of the author's comments in the text, the tales serve to illustrate a point which Juan Ruiz wishes to make to the implied reader. He deals with two principal subjects in these sections, the nature of human beings and the world, and the interpretation of his book. The tales, both in their obvious message as well as in the interpretations stated by Juan Ruiz, do speak to these subjects. The message implied by the context, however, has to do with signs and their meanings. Through signs people communicate with each other, as in the silent duel between the Roman and the Greek; and God communicates with people through signs like the stars, but signs are often ambiguous and misleading. Even the signs governed by the laws of God and nature can be interpreted to contradict the truth as much as predict it, as in the tale of the five prophesies. The content of the tales conveys guidelines for understanding the Libro de buen amor, and

illustrates the idea that God's will triumphs even when the circumstances seem impossible, but the context suggests that signs may imply one thing and mean another. Stories are also signs, signs of the structure and nature of the society which uses them, and they are also ambiguous.

Two tales narrated by the archpriest are directed to the reader and comment on the reaction of women to men who try to tempt them. The rejected lover, the archpriest, narrates one tale as an example of a prudent woman's rejection of his advances and as a warning to women who might fall prey to men. The content of the tales, both the stated interpretation and the associated moral, teaches the idea that women should be prudent in their relationships to men. The context of the tales draws the reader's attention again to the issue of deceitful appearances. The prudent mastiff that refuses the poisoned bread detects the trick that the thief intends. The lion who leaves the carcass of the ass with the wolf is foolish and imprudent for trusting an animal that he knows to be deceitful.

The remaining tales in the narrative context are told by the archpriest, the autobiographical protagonist of the Libro de buen amor, and by the allegorical character, Don Amor. This time two sides of the same issue are juxtaposed in the archpriest's long invective against Love and Love's response. Juan Ruiz denounces Love for the problems that he causes in people's lives. The stated interpretations of the tales in his monologue illustrate how Don Amor is responsible for luring people into the seven

deadly sins. However, the implicit meaning communicated by the story has to do with the consequences of deceit. Whether people allow themselves to be deceived by others, or attempt to deceive others, or deceive themselves, the cost is high. Love is a master of deceit, not only because it lures people into situations that they would otherwise avoid, but because it makes them deceitful themselves. The storytelling context conveys yet another interpretation. In spite of the archpriest's understanding of the nature of love and the danger that it poses to people, he is ambivalent about his feelings. For all his strong speech, he still cannot give up the desire to be successful in love. Love is a powerful motivation in human lives, and an influence that seems nearly unavoidable.

Don Amor's response to the accusations of the archpriest concludes the final set of tales in narrative context. The interpretations of the tales which he states in his arguments to the archpriest uphold the moral truth generally associated with those tales. However, Don Amor uses them as the basis for the amatory advice which he gives the priest. The key points of this advice are that the lover must be diligent in his pursuit of the woman, and that deceit is one of the most important means of winning and keeping a lover. The context of the tales confirms Don Amor's advice that lovers should be skilled in deceit. By telling these stories and relating their commonly understood moral interpretation to amatory advice, he subverts the expected reaction to the tales and deceives the archpriest.

NOTES

1 Juan Ruiz, Libro de buen amor, ed. Joan Corominas (Madrid: Gredos, 1973), sts. 166-180 (p.129-133). All further references to specific stanzas of this work appear in the text.

2 Felix Lecoy, Recherches sur le "Libro de buen amor,"de Juan Ruiz, archipretre de Hita (Paris: Droz, 1938), p. 122; Ian Michael, "The Function of the Popular Tale in the Libro de buen amor," in "Libro de buen amor" Studies, ed. G. B. Gybbon-Monypenny (London: Tamesis, 1970), p. 190.

3 Ibn Hazm, Collar de la Paloma, trans. A. J. Arberry (London: Luzac and Co., 1953); Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, The Romance of the Rose, trans. Harry W. Robbins (New York: Dutton, 1962).

4 Michael, p. 191.

5 Roger Walker, "'Con miedo de la muerte la miel non es sabrosa'," in "Libro de buen amor" Studies, ed. G. B. Gybbon-Monypenny (London: Tamesis, 1970), p. 239.

6 Michael, p. 193.

7 Anthony Zahareas, The Art of Juan Ruiz Archpriest of Hita (Madrid: Estudios de Literatura Española, 1965), p.115.

8 Lecoy, p. 126.

9 Michael, p. 195.

10 Michael, p. 195

11 Michael, p. 197.

12 Gonzalo Sobejano, "Consecuencia y diversidad en el Libro de buen amor," in El Arcipreste de Hita: El libro, el autor, la tierra, la época, ed. M. Criado de Val (Barcelona: SERESA, 1973), p. 15.

13 Michael, p. 198.

14 Zahareas "Structure and Ideology in the Libro de buen amor," Corónica, 7 (1979), p. 96.

15 Michael, pp. 200-201.

16 Joan Corominas, ed. Libro de buen amor, by Juan Ruiz (Madrid: Gredos, 1973), pp.180-182.

17 Michael, p. 203.

18 Lecoy, pp. 155-157; Michael, p. 202-203; Zahareas, The Art of Juan Ruiz, pp. 79-80.

19 Zahareas, The Art of Juan Ruiz, pp. 89-90.

20 Michael, p. 204.

21 Stanford Bergstrom, "A Structural Constant in the Libro de buen amor", Journal of Hispanic Philology, 3 (1978), p. 40.

22 Michael, p. 205.

23 Michael, pp. 207-208.

24 Corominas, p. 348.

25 Zahareas, The Art of Juan Ruiz, pp. 26-27.

26 A. D. Deyermond, "Some Aspects of Parody in the Libro de buen amor," in "Libro de buen amor" Studies, G. B. Gybbon-Monypenny, ed. (London: Tamesis, 1970), pp. 57-61.

27 Sara Sturm, "The Greeks and the Romans: The Archpriest's Warning to his Reader," Romance Notes, 10 (1969), p. 406.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF TALES -- DIALOGUE SETTING

A go-between sent by the archpriest and women whom she is trying to procure for him tell all of the tales in this section in the context of dialogue. Three episodes in the Libro de buen amor involve the use of tales in this context. The first takes place early in the book, before the visit of Don Amor. The woman in this brief episode tells only two tales and is known as the dueña. The second is the more familiar Endrina episode which occurs immediately after Don Amor and Doña Venus leave the archpriest. Although the story of Don Melón and Doña Endrina is quite long, it incorporates only three tales. The final amorous episode of the Libro de buen amor tells of the archpriest's attempts to win the love of Doña Garoza. The two women relate much of the story through the exchange of tales--ten in all.

In each case the go-between uses the tales as a means of persuading the woman to meet the priest and the woman uses the tales as a means of refusing the old woman's offers. The fact that folktales are used as a means of persuasion implies a certain level of credibility and commonly understood intent associated with them. The two women are both the storyteller and the audience for each tale. Juan Ruiz, as well as the fictive archpriest and Don Amor, use all the tales in narrative context to convey information to the implied reader or audience of the Libro

de buen amor. They are used either as a means of direct communication with the reader or indirectly as part of the archpriest's narration of his autobiography. Fictional characters narrate the tales of the second group, and they do not communicate directly with the reader. Neither the autobiographical figure of the archpriest nor the author as narrator appears in any of the scenes.

An important aspect of the use of the tales in this section is the difference between the stated response to the tale and the implied response. The tale chosen as a rejoinder, or the action taken by the listener conveys an unspoken response. Often the two responses, stated and implied, indicate that two very different interpretations of the tale are at play. The justification of the interpretations stated by the storytellers has an effect on the reader's response to each incident and to the literary work.

The first episode contains two tales. It occurs early in the text in the first section relating the attempts of the archpriest's messenger to procure a lover for him (77 - 104). The dueña tells both of the tales used in this section to the messenger, using them to illustrate or emphasize the points of her argument for refusing the offers of the archpriest. The first is the tale of the animals who visit the ailing lion. When the lion decides that he is hungry, he appoints the wolf to divide the meat of a bull among the company. Using the excuse that the lion has not been well, the wolf gives him the entrails and takes the best

meat for himself and the others. The lion is furious and deals the wolf a fatal blow. The task of dividing the meat then falls to the fox, who gives the best of the carcass to the lion, keeping only the entrails for herself and the others (82 - 88). The final stanza summarizes the moral of the tale:

> el león dixo: 'Comadre, ¿qui t' mostró fer parteción
> tan buena e tan guisada, tan derecha e con razón?'
> Ella diz: 'En la cabeça del lobo tomé lición:
> en el lobo castigué que feziesse o qué non.'
> (88 a-d)

The woman claims that this tale justifies her decision to be wary of the messenger because she has heard how others have been deceived by her. She will not be taken in by Trotaconventos' claims because she is prudent and has learned from others' mistakes. I agree with Ian Michael in his suggestion that the tale is an example of wisdom acquired from observation in this case, rather than wisdom of concessions to power.[1] By prudent application of the wisdom of the tale, she will avoid falling into the same trap.

A significant change in the roles represented by each animal occurs between the introductory and concluding remarks. As she begins the tale she identifies herself with the fox who learns from the wolf's experience, but in her closing statement the dueña threatens to become like the lion and teach the old woman a lesson. Juan Ruiz emphasizes ambiguity by the manner in which he develops the context of the storytelling and by his description of how the dueña employs the tale. His manipulation of the story and

context indicate his understanding of the breadth and flexibility of the function of story, as well as his familiarity with storytelling contexts.

The next stanza is either a direct contradiction of what has just transpired, or else a lapse on the part of the poet. Corominas discusses the stanzas between the tales, and concludes that the change in direction was simply a manipulation of the story by Juan Ruiz in order to allow him to include a cantar written at another time.[2] I agree that Juan Ruiz is manipulating the text; however, it hardly seems likely that he would treat the narrative so carelessly as to change the line of the story simply to add a previously written verse. In the light of the careful twists of meaning that he has given to the folktales used in other sections of the book, and considering the subtle way that he has played the parallel arguments of Don Amor and the archpriest against each other, I believe that the apparent contradictions in these stanzas deliberately communicate an ambiguous message to the reader. On the one hand, the dueña answers the archpriest's go-between harshly by threatening to become like the lion in the tale. On the other hand, the next stanza indicates that her words do not mean exactly what they say. By her actions, the dueña has accepted the offer of the archpriest, or at least has agreed to continue negotiations. The outward show is one of rejection and of being carefully guarded against the dangers of the would-be lover. The archpriest's description of the verses that he wrote to her and her reaction to them are a logical next step in the

development of this affair, if it is really only an outward show. If this were the only incident in the Libro de buen amor of this kind of contradiction between the stated reaction of a character and the apparent course of events, we might be tempted to attribute it to the carelessness of the author. However, this is only one example of such ambiguous passages. Rather than a poorly disguised addition, I believe that it is an integral part of the message which Juan Ruiz develops for the reader. The dueña knows the dangers of continuing to see the archpriest and his messenger. The tale which she tells is proof of that. But knowing the right course of action and choosing to follow it are two completely different matters. This is precisely the point which Juan Ruiz makes in this instance and others like it.

The second tale which the dueña relates does not follow the expected line of reasoning if we believe everything that she told us before. But if we accept the idea that she did not completely reject the archpriest, then this tale is an appropriate response to the messenger's visit after people have begun to gossip about the archpriest's tales of his exploits with her. The first Aesopic tale used in the Libro de buen amor to this point, this folktale tells the story of the earth in labor. After such moaning and groaning that all who hear are ready to flee in terror, the earth gives birth not to the great monster that they expect after all the commotion, but to a mole (98 - 100).

The dueña's interpretation of the tale follows:

E bien assí acaeció a muchos e a tu amo:
prometen dar mucho trigo e dan poca paja-tamo
(101 a-b)

Omne que mucho fabla, faze menos a vezes,
pone muy grand espanto: chica cosa es dos nuezes;
las cosas mucho caras otr'ora son rafezes,
las viles e refezes son caras a las vezes.
(102 a-d)

She communicates two distinct lessons through this tale, and both are mentioned in her remarks. The difference between the two morals is subtle. On the one hand, the dueña condemns those who promise much and deliver little. She speaks from the experience—her own or observed—of those disappointed by their lovers. On the other hand, she speaks to the problem of astute observation or "sizing up" of people. Is this priest-lover all he seems to be or wants her to think that he is? The implication is that she is suspicious of his claims. In the light of the advice on the art of love that Don Amor gives to the archpriest in a later section of the book, the dueña is indeed astute. Don Amor suggests that the important thing for any hopeful lover to do is to promise a woman anything and promise her often, whether or not he intends to give (488 - 489). Lecoy and Michael both discuss the dual moral of the second tale. Michael interprets the use of the tale as a "partial failure of adjustment" that "accords generally with the theme of deception by lovers which is central to the episode."[3] Lecoy simply notes the fact that earlier tale collections use both morals and that Juan Ruiz states both explicitly.[4]

The next episode containing tales in the context of dialogue is the story of Doña Endrina and Don Melón, which begins immediately after the visit of Don Amor and Doña Venus. The first tale in the debate between Trotaconventos and Doña Endrina, a young widow with whom the archpriest has fallen in love, is the tale known as the "Swallow and the hemp seeds," classified in the Stith Thompson motif index under "The Wise and the Foolish: Wise and Unwise Conduct: Forethought in the prevention of other's plans." Juan Ruiz's treatment of the tale is complex. Trotaconventos relates the story, presenting herself in the role of the swallow that wisely advises the other birds to eat the hemp seeds sown by the hunter before it is too late. The other birds will not listen and make fun of the swallow. She approaches the bustard then, and urges him to pull up the hemp that has already begun to sprout. He also refuses and scorns the swallow. Realizing that she will get no help from the birds, the swallow makes her nest at the hunter's house and pleases him with her song. When the hemp is harvested and woven into nets, the bustard is soon captured (745 - 755). The apparent meaning of the tale is appropriate. The young widow Endrina does face the real problem of being easy prey for those who would like to have access to her wealth, and she would be prudent to plan carefully for dealing with potential enemies. However, in the context of the women's discussion, the tale is not used as a means of suggesting right choices, but as a means of deception. By feigning concern for Endrina's well-being, and offering good advice in the form of an

appropriate tale that is used to teach a widely accepted moral, Trotaconventos is in fact deliberately deceiving Endrina with sound teaching.

Ian Michael's statement that Juan Ruiz uses the tale without much adjustment, and that he intends the usual moral of the tale is valid only in the context of the frame of the debate between the two women.[5] Once outside the immediate limits of their debate it is evident that the messenger does not apply the traditional moral of the tale, in spite of her apparent faithfulness to the tradition. Trotaconventos is not really advising Endrina to behave wisely since the course of action which she suggests would entrap Endrina, not save her. Rather, she is working to deceive Endrina by claiming to be a wise woman who simply wants to help Endrina make judicious choices. The meaning of the tale is radically different if we cast Endrina in the role of the swallow being threatened by the hunter, the archpriest. Instead of implying that the swallow is astute in seeking to please the hunter and escape the trap he plans, the tale illustrates the swallow's ultimate defeat. One way or another, she will come under the power of the hunter. By willingly seeking his "protection" she merely avoids the worse fate of the bustard, who suffers public shame.

Endrina counters in the debate with the long tale of the wolf kicked into the stream by the sow. A wolf finds a rasher of bacon, but hears a sneeze which he interprets as a sign of good luck. Abandoning the bacon, he sets out to find his good fortune.

He comes to a meadow where two rams are fighting, and announces to them that he will eat one of them. They agree, but ask him to settle their dispute first and decide which one is the rightful owner of the meadow. They recommend that he stand in the center and let them run to him, to see which one arrives first. He agrees, and the rams crush him between them. The wounded wolf runs away and happens upon a herd of goats. The surprised animals trick the wolf by telling him that he was sent to serve in their ceremony, and that he will have many fine young goats to eat after the festivities. Believing that he has found his good fortune at last, the wolf begins to howl and the goats bleat loudly. The goatherds and their dogs come to investigate and chase the wolf away. Next he finds a sow with her piglets, and tells her that he will eat them. The sow simply asks the wolf to first baptize her young so that they will die Christians. When the wolf approaches the sow, she pushes him into the nearby millstream. Badly wounded after being run through the mill, the wolf gives up and regrets the loss of his bacon (766 - 779).

Taken at face value, the moral that one should accept his lot is a strong response to Trotaconventos' argument. Furthermore, the tale once again poses the problem of ambiguous signs--the sneeze should mean that the wolf will have good luck. Instead, he finds only trouble, and loses his bacon in the bargain. By misreading the signs the wolf deceives himself. His good fortune is the bacon, not something else. Endrina's actions in the remainder of this section show that she was not committed to the

idea of leaving well enough alone. In spite of the fact that the woman rejects the archpriest once again, the go-between continues to try to persuade her that she is really in love with him. Trotaconventos finally succeeds in tricking her into being with the priest alone, and they are "casados." The stanzas missing from this section of the Libro de buen amor make it somewhat more difficult to determine precisely how this tale relates to the development of the story. Although Corominas and others have supplied the probable details of the story, much of the subtlety of the characters' interpretations of the tales is lost. The results of the go-between's efforts prove the wisdom of the moral of the tale. Endrina told the story to justify refusing the archpriest's advances, but in the end it describes accurately the situation she created for herself by succumbing to his pleas.

After the archpriest's adventure with Endrina, a number of episodes which do not include any folktales take place, including his encounter with the serranas and the battle between Don Carnal and Doña Cuaresma. Following these adventures, the archpriest engages the services of a go-between once again. One brief, ill-fated amorous episode takes place, and then the go-between recommends that she should try to procure a nun for whom she once worked. After extolling the virtues of nuns as lovers, she pays a visit to Garoza. In greeting the nun she indicates that her present employer is the archpriest and that he already has fallen in love with Garoza.

This episode contains more tales than any other in the context of dialogue. The first story of the series is Garoza's response to Trotaconventos' greeting. It was popular in both Graeco-Latin and Oriental traditions, but Juan Ruiz's version is based on the western tradition. Its location at the outset of the dialogue and the manner in which Garoza delivers it indicate that it is an accusation of Trotaconventos' motives as well as a defense of the security Garoza seems to enjoy in the convent. The insult is clear, and Trotaconventos must either justify her suggestion of a liaison between Garoza and the priest, or admit that she has an evil purpose at heart.

The tale relates the story of a gardener and a snake that he rescues from the cold. Throughout the winter the gardener cares for the snake and nurses it back to health. When spring comes, the snake attacks the gardener (1348 - 1355). Garoza sets out the opposing sides of the debate by her choice of tale and assignment of roles, presenting herself as the kind benefactor betrayed by the ungrateful snake. She accuses Trotaconventos of first accepting her kindness and protection, then turning on her and trying to take advantage of her in order to ingratiate herself with her present employer.

The go-between does not answer directly the accusations implied in Garoza's tale, but turns them aside with an accusation of her own in the form of a tale. The tale of the hunter and the greyhound tells how a young hound wins its master's favor with its skill. Years later, however, when the hound has begun to age, the

hunter beats the dog for failing to bring in the prey (1357 - 1366). Rather than defend her motives, she thus suggests that Garoza is ungrateful for the work done for her in the past.

The tale also implies her suspicion that Garoza is not chiding the go-between for her inappropriate suggestions, but that she is unhappy because Trotaconventos did not bring a gift. The alcahueta has told Garoza that the priest did not send her, but that she came on her own initiative to propose the idea to the nun. Perhaps Garoza's objection is not that this is an evil thing, but that it is not a sure thing. Carrying out the parallel of the hound and the master, the hunter is not unhappy that the hound brings something evil or unacceptable, but that he fails to bring anything at all.

As Ian Michael suggests, one predominant aspect of this tale is its comment on disrespect of the old:

> Los bienes e loores muchos, de mancebez,
> defienden la flaqueza, culpa de la vejez;
> por ser el omne viejo non pierde por end prez:
> el seso del buen viejo no s'mueve de rehez;
> (1362 a-d)

Trotaconventos does not develop this idea in detail, but uses it to strengthen her position that Garoza does not appreciate her devotion and hard work. Using a ploy similar to the one used with Endrina, the old woman tells a truthful tale in a twisted context to try to deceive the nun. Trotaconventos is old, and people often treat the old with disrespect, but that does not pertain to the issue at hand. It does serve to play on Garoza's sympathies.

At this point the reader begins to see the cunning with which both women will use the tales. The multiple meanings of each tale give each of them a means of attacking her opponent's weak points and escaping from any dead end in the argument. Readers of the Libro de buen amor are also faced with a complex set of ideas from which they must draw their own conclusions.

Garoza now turns the focus of the debate from Trotaconventos' character to the dangers of the kind of adventure proposed by the go-between. The story of the town mouse and the country mouse is classified in the Stith Thompson index under "Wise and Unwise Conduct: Choice between evils." After visiting the country mouse and seeing what a simple life he leads, the town mouse invites the country mouse to visit him in the city. The country mouse is properly impressed with the rich fare until the mistress comes home and frightens him. He chooses to return to the security of his simple rural life (1370 - 1385).

The possibility of meeting the priest is intriguing, but as Garoza points out, such pleasures are often associated with great dangers. In the lines summarizing the moral which Garoza derives from the tale, she states that it is better to stay with the sure thing—that is, with the physical and moral safety of the convent, than to risk both reputation and salvation by succumbing to the temptation that Trotaconventos sets before her. The archpriest has made this point himself, in his denunciation of Don Amor, with the tale of the dog who coveted the meat that he saw in the reflection in the water.

By her admission that the thought of the young priest appeals to her, Garoza gives Trotaconventos the opening she needs to win one round of the debate. The old woman uses the next tale to attack Garoza's timidity. She is no longer defending herself and her actions before the nun. The picture of life in the convent presented by Trotaconventos does not compare favorably with the riches that she seems to offer in the name of her employer. In the tale with which Trotaconventos responds, a cock scratching for food finds a large sapphire, but can only complain that he would rather have found something to eat (1387 - 1391). According to Trotaconventos, Garoza is acting like the cock who does not see the value of the sapphire if she refuses to even consider the offer that Trotaconventos makes.

Two interpretations are usually associated with this tale. One lesson is that value depends on usefulness, and the other that fools do not recognize a treasure. Although the first is not the one which Trotaconventos uses as her closing argument, I disagree with Ian Michael in his statement that Juan Ruiz suppresses this interpretation of the tale.[6] The verbal debate between the two women is only one aspect of the material which Juan Ruiz presents. As Corominas suggests in his notes on the Arabic influences evident in the Garoza episode:

> ...ya no sólo en la cultura y en la obra del Arcipreste, sino en su misma naturaleza literaria y aún en su constitución cerebral, debe mirarse en el carácter constante que en toda su obra reviste el hábito de dar un doble valor, literal y simbólico, a todo lo que piensa, idea, dice y escribe. Yo no sé

> otro autor europeo en quien este hábito adquiera un alcance tan general, pues por mucho que este rasgo llegue al colmo en cada uno de los versos de la Batalla de Carnal y Cuaresma, lo mismo seguimos viendo en la Procesión de Don Amor, en la Historia de Doña Garoza, en las Fábulas, y aún en los amores de Don Melón (nombres, etc.), en los amoríos menores: en una palabra en todas partes.7

Here the question of usefulness as opposed to the inability to recognize true meaning is one that the archpriest himself raised earlier in reference to the purpose and/or value of his own work. The following lines recall the problems of interpretation of the Libro de buen amor which were cited early in the text, and describe the present dilemma which Garoza faces as she responds to Trotaconventos: "Muchos leen el libro e tiénenlo en poder // que non saben qué leen ni l' pueden entender;" (1390 a-b). Therefore, this tale is much broader in scope than may first appear. It encompasses not only two sets of characters, but the very work itself and its reception.

Without further comment or debate, Garoza dismisses Trotaconventos, and tells her to return in the morning for her answer (1395). The alcahueta does return the following morning, and finding Garoza at morning prayers, accuses her of taking this business of the convent all too seriously. Garoza is noticeably more tolerant of the old woman this time, and cheerfully accompanies her to hear more about the amorous priest. "Alegre va la dueña del coro al parlador" (1399 a). Trotaconventos begins their discussion with a tale that she claims is just for entertainment, just to make Garoza smile:

"Señora", diz la vieja, "dezirvos he un juguete:
no m' cunta como al asno cuntió con el blanchete:
que él vio con su señora jugar en el tapete:
dezirvos he la fabla si m' dierdes un risete.
(1400 a-d)

The choice of tale is intriguing. It is the story of the foolish ass who tries to imitate his mistress' lap dog in order to win her affection. Instead, the animal's unnatural behavior frightens the mistress and her servants beat the ass (1401 - 1408). In her introduction to the tale Trotaconventos casts herself in the role of the ass. She would then be saying that her actions are wrong since they go against the nature of her being:

Non deve ser el omne a mal fer denodado:
dezir nin comedir lo que non le es dado;
lo que Dios e natura an vedado e negado
de lo fazer el cuerdo non deve ser osado;
(1407 a-d)

However, Trotaconventos' behavior is in fact very much in character. Her closing remarks give a peculiar twist to the interpretation, placing emphasis on the well-meaning but foolish intent of the ass, rather than on the idea of stepping out of the limits imposed by nature and God. She seems to try to excuse herself for having suggested such an inappropriate idea to Garoza. Ian Michael suggests that Juan Ruiz has forced the meaning of the tale "in order to adjust it to its function in his outer narrative."[8] Trotaconventos states that:

quando cuida el bavieca que diz bien e derecho,
e cuida fer servicio e plazer con su fecho,
dize mal e locura, faz pesar e despecho:

callar a las vegadas faze mucho provecho.
(1408 a-d)

Michael suggests that this means she will not reiterate the arguments of the previous day. However, this statement can also be interpreted as a self-deprecating remark, typical of Juan Ruiz, meant to heighten Garoza's interest. In fact, Trotaconventos then cleverly puts the burden of initiative on Garoza by telling her that she does not dare even ask what Garoza has decided about the proposal.

Garoza's quick and pointed response is evidence that she has understood both the ruse of humility and the underlying question:

La dueña dixo: "Vieja, mañana madrugueste
a dezirme pastrañas; de lo que ayer fableste
yo non lo consentría como tú m' lo rogueste,
que consentir non devo tan mal juego como éste.
(1419 a-d)

With only a brief introduction, she begins the tale of the fox caught in town. Garoza casts herself in the role of the fox who finds himself trapped within the walls of the town after a night of feasting on stolen chickens. In an effort to save himself, he plays dead. Different townspeople pass, mocking the fox and some decide to take parts of his body. After having his tail, tooth, eye and ears removed, the fox finally abandons the scheme and runs away when a passerby wants to cut out his heart (1412 - 1421).

Garoza claims that women who succumb to the deceits of men often suffer a similar plight. Not only are they subject to the scorn of men, but they must bear the wrath of God and rejection of

the world as well. The idea of prudence is very important. One must always plan an escape in the event of danger. Garoza states that it is Trotaconventos' advice to abandon prudence that causes her to lash out at the go-between and accuse her of plotting to endanger her very soul. To the reader there is a general warning that all women should beware the deceits of men. While the fox is able to withstand the severe punishment of losing several appendages in an effort to save his life, he abandons the ploy when it puts him in a position of giving up his life in order to maintain the farce. As Garoza states in the introductory lines to the tale, to give in to Trotaconventos' urging would be like submitting to death (1410 - 1411). She accuses the go-between of deliberately trying to mislead her into a situation where she would surely be forced into a corner like the fox, and be lucky to escape with life or salvation (1428 a-d).

This tale does not answer directly the immediately preceding tale told by Trotaconventos'. Rather it forms a part of Garoza's response to Trotaconventos suggestion of the day before that she agree to meet the archpriest. Although it is overtly a negative response, it is also a tacit consent to continue negotiations. Garoza's interpretation of the tale relates to the potential problems inherent in an affair like the one Trotaconventos proposes. On a more immediate level, the tale illustrates the situation that Garoza has already created by negotiating with the archpriest's messenger. Like the fox, she has stayed "in town" too long, and lost most of her defenses. If she does not escape

now, she probably never will. Garoza refuses the "out" that Trotaconventos has offered her and moves deeper into the intrigue. Thus the alcahueta has deceived her once again.

Garoza does not refuse the old woman's offer on the grounds that it is immoral or inappropriate, but on the grounds that it is a very dangerous proposal for her. She would have to bear the greater risk, and Trotaconventos has offered no assurance of protection. With a few choice remarks about the lack of respect which men have for women and the unfairness of it all, she dismisses the old woman, threatening to pay her what she deserves. Yet, as the debate continues, we see that Garoza once again demonstrates that knowledge of the wisdom which would protect her from danger does not always determine her course of action. Instead of bolting from the trap like the fox, she chooses to remain and take her chances in further negotiations with the alcahueta.

Garoza's harsh words do not daunt Trotaconventos. She quickly tells another tale in which she puts herself in the role of the defenseless, worthless mouse. The mouse convinces the mighty lion to spare his life, and in return saves the lion from the hunter's net (1425 - 1434). There are several ideas at play. By casting herself as the mouse, Trotaconventos plays on Garoza's sympathy and appeals to her ego. She is insignificant by comparison to Garoza, but suggests that she has some abilities which Garoza might find helpful some day. Trotaconventos implies that the proposal she has made may offer more than Garoza thinks

in terms of material gain. By casting Garoza as the lion, she counters the dueña's arguments of the previous tale and reassures her that she is strong enough to handle the risk involved in an adventure with the priest.

Garoza now excuses her own anger by claiming to be wary of such flattery. It is a simple matter of prudence to beware of flatterers. To illustrate the dangers of being taken in by generous, but untrue, words, she tells the tale of the fox and the crow. A fox spies a crow with a piece of cheese in his mouth sitting in a tree. By flattering the crow the fox convinces him to sing, and steals the cheese that falls from the crow's mouth when he does (1437 - 1443).

Were Garoza to apply the wisdom of the tale to her own situation, she would reject the alcahueta's flattery and offer of reconciliation and not be tricked by the go-between. Her interpretation of the tale is positive indication that she understands the dangers of the old woman's tempting words: "non es cosa segura creer dulce lisonja: // de aqueste dulçor suele venir amarga lonja;" (1443 a-b). However, in the following lines we realize that Garoza has begun to succumb to Trotaconventos' wiles. Garoza does not apply the teaching to her own situation, but is in fact taken in by the flattery of the old woman. The flattery appeals to her, and it soon becomes obvious that her defenses are broken.

The last lines of Trotaconventos' response to Garoza at first seem difficult to interpret in the light of what the go-between has said up to now:

> "Señora", diz la vieja, "est miedo non tomedes:
> el omne que vos ama, nunca lo esquivedes;
> todas las otras temen esso que vos temedes:
> el miedo de las liebres las monjas le tenedes.
> (1444 a-d)

As Corominas points out, discrepancies in the manuscripts further complicate the issue; however, we can be sure that there are several levels of meaning involved.[9] Juan Ruiz continues to develop the moral issue, but parallel to it we find the issue of prudence—not being taken in by flattery in this case. The go-between turns this last argument back on Garoza by her clever choice of the next tale.

Following the pattern she set at the beginning of their debate, Trotaconventos does not respond directly to either the issue of prudence in the face of flattery or the moral issue, but in this case attacks Garoza's idea of prudence as a weakness. She tells of a group of timid rabbits who are frightened by the sound of the waves on the lake. They discuss the noise and decide that there is no reason for alarm, then run off when one of the rabbits panics (1445 - 1452).

Lecoy has noted the ambiguous ending of Juan Ruiz's version of the tale:

> Chez Juan Ruiz, au contraire, après les strophes 1447 et 1448 qui semblent annoncer un dénouement analogue,

> la strophe 1449 en amène une autre: les lièvres sont repris par la crainte. Peut-être faut-il voir là une influence de LBG ou la fable, transformèe, a un tout autre sens et ou les lievres voient dans les grenouilles un exemple à suivre, non un danger a èviter.10

Perhaps Trotaconventos wishes to imply that Garoza should take her lesson from the other nuns—not that she should avoid the risks involved in meeting the priest, but that she should look around her and see that there is no real danger—only noises in the forest. She should not allow herself to be cheated out of possible pleasure and material gain by a few faint-hearted friends.

On another level of meaning Juan Ruiz suggests the importance of fear as a deterrent to inappropriate action. In fact, Garoza presented this idea earlier in the lines following the fable of fox and crow: "muchos cuidan que guarda el viñadero el pago // e es la magadaña que está en el cadahalso" (1442 c-d). Trotaconventos continues to attack Garoza's timidity by turning this argument around and suggesting that the fearless are the conquerers in battle. The faint-hearted win nothing and die in flight.

In the last exchange of this sequence Garoza ends her discussion with the tale of the man in league with the devil. In order to gain protection and thus be free of the fear of punishment, a man signs over his soul to the devil. For a while the devil rescues him each time he is caught for his crimes. However, the devil's patience runs out, and he finally deserts the

man and leaves him to the judgment of the court (1454 - 1479). Through the story she reiterates her arguments that the go-between is a false friend, a devil in disguise who will lure her into a dangerous situation, then surely desert her as quickly as possible when any problems arise. By conventional moral standards, Garoza's prudent application of this tale would prevent her from being duped by Trotaconventos. However, her use of the tale suggests that Garoza knows that Trotaconventos does have the power to deliver what she has promised. Immediately after the tale and her comments on false friends, Garoza ignores (again!) the lesson she has just presented and plays into Trotaconventos' hand by asking for a description of the man who is so interested in her.

Fictional characters within the innermost frame of reference in the Libro de buen amor relate the three groups of stories in a dialogue context. The first group consists of two tales told by a dueña to Trotaconventos. Both the moral generally associated with the tales and the interpretations stated by the dueña exemplify the point that she wishes to make. Women should learn from others' mistakes and prudently avoid falling into the trap of love. But the context of the tale leads the reader to another conclusion. The woman's threats to become like a lion, and thus defend herself from Trotaconventos are only a veiled acceptance of the go-between's offers. After she becomes the victim of gossip, the dueña does finally react to the archpriest's offers with a prudent refusal, communicating in both the content and the context

of the tale that it is necessary to evaluate people and situations carefully in order to avoid being deceived.

The second pair of tales forms part of the conversations between Endrina and Trotaconventos. The content of Trotaconventos' tale of the wise swallow is upheld in her application of that interpretation to Endrina's situation. The implied interpretation of the tale shows a different side of the swallow's predicament and accurately illustrates Endrina's own dilemma. The context of the tale fulfills the idea that there is no escape from the snares of love. Regardless of the choice that Endrina makes, she will suffer the consequences of love's deceits. Endrina's response is in the form of a complex story of the wolf kicked into the millstream by the sow. The stated moral coincides with the point that she makes in her response; that is, that one should be satisfied with one's lot. However, the implied interpretation makes a strong statement about the correct interpretation of signs. In the context of the tale, Endrina does not interpret the signs correctly and Trotaconventos deceives her. Endrina has only herself to blame for her imprudent decision to believe Trotaconventos.

The final episode in the dialogue context is the debate between Trotaconventos and Garoza, in which Garoza negotiates the decision to become involved with the archpriest. The tales form a complex sequence of statement and response in which the content of the story does not state the same idea as the context. On the one hand, Trotaconventos seeks to persuade Garoza to risk her

reputation and the security of the convent to have an affair with the archpriest. She states her offer in terms of tales that communicate a well-known moral. Her own interpretation of the tales reflects poorly on Garoza, implying that she is ungrateful, foolishly afraid of the unknown, and incapable of recognizing value when she sees it. Garoza responds with similar tales whose moral lessons have to do with prudence, particularly when it comes to dealing with potential danger, discerning flattery, and avoiding false friends. The context of the storytelling event communicates an entirely different message. On this level the exchange consists primarily of Trotaconventos' use of tales to convince Garoza to accept the archpriest's offers. She plays on Garoza's sympathy, appeals to her ego, and insults her through the manipulation of the tales within the context. Garoza's response also communicates a different meaning in context than in the text of the tales. She speaks of prudence and wise choices, but carefully allows the go-between to continue negotiations so long as they are discreet. Finally, her actions betray her intent and Garoza agrees to meet the archpriest.

NOTES

1 Michael, p. 186.

2 Corominas, pp. 94-96.

3 Michael, p. 188.

4 Lecoy, pp. 121-122.

5 Michael, p. 206.

6 Michael, p. 210.

7 Corominas, p. 524.

8 Michael, p. 211.

9 Corominas, p. 538.

10 Lecoy, p. 137.

CONCLUSION

Each of the two groups of folktales studied in the previous chapters is comprised of stories told in a particular type of context. The analysis of the individual tales suggests that there is a pattern of characteristics for each group based primarily on the manner in which the tale is used, the identity of the storyteller and audience, and the interpretation of the tales from different audience perspectives.

The first group is comprised of tales that are used as exempla in narrative discourse; the second, of tales used in dialogue as a means of debate. There are three pairs of storyteller and audience: First, Juan Ruiz as the storyteller, with the reader as audience; second, the fictive archpriest and Don Amor as both storyteller and audience; and finally, two of the women fictional characters as both storyteller and audience. At least three interpretations of each tale are possible: one is derived from a well-known moral usually associated with the tale; the second is stated by the narrator of the tale, and although often very similar to the well-known moral, may have a slightly different focus; and the third is drawn from the reader's understanding of the storyteller's use of the tale and the audience's reaction to it. The first two interpretations are based on the content of the tale, the third on the context of the

storytelling. Although the interpretation of each tale depends to some extent on the specific situation to which it is applied, there are certain characteristics of both the tales' content and context which hold true for all the tales in a group regardless of the particular setting in which they occur. The first two levels of interpretation, those based on the content of the story, may be either stated or implied, or both. The interpretation based on the context of the storytelling and the audience's response to it is always implied by the author's description of the storytelling context and the action which follows.

As noted in Chapter I, folklorists regard the understanding of the relationship of storyteller to audience as a vital part of the analysis of folktales. In a live storytelling situation, the observer records the audience's response to the narrator and tale; in a literary text, we depend on the author's account of the storytelling and his description of the interaction of the storyteller and audience. The author creates a narrator, an audience and a context for the storytelling as part of the literary work; and simultaneously, he himself is a narrator, the reader is another audience and the literary work is the context of the storytelling. An interpretation of the literary text must take into consideration the relationship of the tales to both audiences as well as the interaction between the storyteller and the two audiences.

The structural framework developed by Juan Ruiz in the Libro de buen amor may be described as three related spheres of action.

The first sphere is the outermost frame of reference in the narrative. In it the author is the only narrator and communicates directly with the reader. The middle sphere is linked to the outer by the person of the archpriest, the fictive narrator of the autobiographical frame story who also addresses the reader. It is linked to the innermost sphere both through the allegorical figure of Don Amor and through the archpriest's narration of the autobiography. While the archpriest addresses both the reader and other fictive characters, Don Amor moves only within the fiction and does not directly address the reader. Finally, the third sphere represents the innermost frame of reference. Neither Juan Ruiz nor the fictive protagonist intervenes in this sphere. The action and the storytelling involve only fictional characters.

The presence or absence of fictional characters is a key factor in analyzing the context of the tales. In the introductory and concluding pieces, apart from the autobiography of the archpriest, only one of the three pairs of audience and storyteller is present. Juan Ruiz, the storyteller, speaks as author of the Libro de buen amor; and the reader of the text, whether medieval or contemporary, is the audience for the storytelling. This outermost frame of reference in the work, aside from the poems of praise, deals primarily with matters of interpretation and evaluation. The three stories in this sphere do the same, and tend to function on a philosophical level rather than a practical one. Juan Ruiz states interpretations of the stories that convey a well-known moral teaching, and implies that

the tales concern how the reader should interpret his work. He makes it clear that the wisdom gleaned from both the tales and his text should be applied by the reader in his own life. The tales in this narrative setting either serve as commentary on the text itself, like the tale of the Greeks and the Romans; or deal with a specific social or philosophical issue that relates to matters in the text, like the tale of the astrologers and the tale of the Clerics of Talavera. In each case the reader must consider the possibility of three meanings or interpretations of the tale: the meaning commonly associated with the tale; the interpretation stated by Juan Ruiz in the narrative; and the meaning derived from the context of storytelling, which is based on the reader's observation of the use of the story in the text.

The storytelling contexts in which the archpriest interacts as protagonist of the autobiography with the allegorical or fictional characters in the text form the remaining three groups of tales in the narrative context. Two of the storytelling settings are comprised of a single tale addressed to the reader. Through one of them the priest tells how he failed to win a woman's love because she prudently rejected his offers, and through the other he warns women to beware the dangers of such love affairs. The longest sequence of tales in this group occurs in the episode in which Don Amor and the archpriest meet. Their interaction occurs entirely within the fictive autobiography and does not involve the reader. This exchange is frequently called a debate, but the long discourses by each are more like sermons or

lectures, with tales that illustrate specific arguments in their speeches. Don Amor and the archpriest use the tales as exempla, stories which embody wisdom and are a means of conveying that wisdom to another, a use which confirms their well-known didactic function. However, the fact that popular tales are inherently ambiguous is also an important factor in their use in this section, and the storytellers' use of that ambiguity confirms the medieval church's belief that such tales were deceptive. The same three levels of interpretation apply for these tales as for those told by the author. The third interpretation, communicated by the storytelling context, applies to the archpriest's evaluation of his unhappy situation and to the reader's evaluation of the Libro de buen amor.

The dialogue context, the second storytelling setting in which the tales appear, occurs entirely within the fictional situation and innermost sphere of action. The storytellers and audience involved are only those women fictional characters created by the author as part of his amorous adventures. In this section the two characters communicate with each other through the tales. The purpose of their storytelling is not to impart wisdom through teaching, but to use stories as a means of persuasion. The power of a tale to persuade rests partly in the fact that any given tale may be interpreted in several ways, and as in narrative setting, the storytellers use this ambiguity. From one point of view, the women argue their positions of temptation versus prudence. From another perspective, the conversation between the

women has the characteristics of a heated debate concerning the negotiation of the value of a proposed service.

As in the other spheres of action, three distinct interpretations develop: the reader knows the moral generally associated with the story; the storyteller states a meaning to explain why she is telling this particular tale; and the context of the storytelling conveys a third meaning. The context is of utmost importance in the dialogue setting, where it is an integral part of the interaction between characters. For example, the listener's response sometimes is simply the choice of the next tale, which at first may appear to be answering a different argument from the one stated by the other storyteller. The action taken by the character communicates yet another message when it seems to contradict both the speaker's knowledge of the wisdom of the tale and her own interpretation of the tale. Occasionally another message lies in the unexpected twist given to the casting of characters. Readers must base their interpretations not only on their knowledge of a tale's usual moral implications, but also on their observation of the application of the tales within this context.

The fiction of the Libro de buen amor is a reflection of human nature and people's capacity to see situations from multiple perspectives. The fictional characters use the folktales as a source of knowledge, evaluate them in the light of their situation and utilize the information according to their needs. The characters often opt to ignore the possible "wise" interpretations

of the tales and choose a different path from the expected one. Juan Ruiz does not attempt to give any explanation for this, but simply presents the story and the storytelling context for the reader's evaluation. From the study of folklore we know that folktales reflect people's ambivalence about the situations which confront them. The tales address common problems and illustrate appropriate ways to resolve the conflict.

The fact that popular tales usually embody information and elicit responses that are common to people in many periods and societies is a significant factor in their analysis. Without this capacity, these stories would cease to be relevant and provocative once removed from their own time frame. In addition to the knowledge and personal experience which they bring to the text, readers have another vital source of interpretative guidelines based on their society's system of moral values. Every society has a sense of "moral truth," and a sense of how it differs from other contemporary societies or from societies of other historical periods in this respect. This sense along with their knowledge and experience, influences the process by which readers interpret texts.

Folklore, in the form of popular tales used in a literary setting which resembles a popular context, contributes to the Libro de buen amor's unique character. The idea of multiple responses to a single folktale and the importance of the interaction between storyteller and audience are keys to our understanding of the way in which Juan Ruiz uses folktales. Other

works of this period contain popular tales, and some are based primarily on the tales. Writers like Juan Manuel, for example, sometimes approximate a popular storytelling context in the frame story used to incorporate a collection of tales. But where Juan Manuel is a product of the medieval period and medieval ideas about folktales, Juan Ruiz is able to break away from that tradition and move ahead of his time. Meléndez says of Juan Manuel, "Don Juan Manuel no acepta la posibilidad de que el texto pueda rebelarse contra su propia intención, de aquí que señale que aún el de poco entendimiento derivará enseñanzas positivas de su lectura..."[1] Juan Manuel must limit the possible responses to the text by imposing his own interpretations on the reader. He presents a traditional tale, and assumes that the prudent application of the moral truth which it embodies will result in an expected and logical consequence. His descriptions of the application of the tales and the pair of verses at the end of each tale define the "appropriate" reader response to each story.

Of Juan Ruiz's open text Meléndez says, "Lo verdaderamente importante es la conciencia que posee el autor de esta dinámica y juego de la escritura, que surge como consecuencia de la estructura compleja del lenguaje y de nuestra incapacidad de dominarlo."[3] Juan Ruiz does not determine the moral of the story for the reader, but allows the full range of responses to his text. The Libro de buen amor is not a collection of folktales, but a literary work that draws on the author's knowledge of how folklore functions as well as on his knowledge of folktales. The

author does not have absolute control over his work. Once in the hands of the reader, outside influences contribute to the reader's disposition toward the book. Scordilis Brownlee and Meléndez suggest that Juan Ruiz was aware of this as he wrote the Libro de buen amor.[3]

The reader's involvement with the folktale is essential to the process of understanding, just as the audience's involvement is an essential element in the understanding of a live storytelling context. The reader participates in the storytelling through the act of reading, responding to the work of Juan Ruiz as the archpriest's audience, and is also an observer of the other storytelling situations within the text. The position is unique in that it allows a view of the work in its totality. The reader not only reacts to the tale, but to the author's account of the storytelling context and the listener's reaction. The fictional characters, who function within the work, have only a limited vision of the impact of the tales and of their persuasive power. From an omniscient viewpoint the reader simultaneously perceives the narrator's use of the tale as well as the reaction of the listener, and can weigh the tales against each other and against the development of the text.

Taken from this point of view, the author's remarks to the reader in the outer sphere of the narrative constitute a warning to beware of the deceit that threatens people everywhere. Throughout the text Juan Ruiz's use of folktales both helps to develop this warning and to illustrate the tactics of deceit. All

signs, even signs governed by God, can mislead by the multiple meanings they convey. The observer must weigh all the information carefully and be prudent in evaluating each situation. Juan Ruiz himself practices his own subtle literary or intellectual deceit by offering the reader multiple options, but giving little guidance in the matter of choosing which option is best or "right." For example, in the middle sphere of action the content of the archpriest's speech to Don Amor warns against deceivers, but the context indicates that he is already a victim of Love's deceit. When he responds, Don Amor blatantly misuses the very signs and tales that the archpriest used to illustrate his arguments. In order to succeed at love, he tells the archpriest, it is necessary to do things which the archpriest knows will bring a person's ruin. In spite of his apparent understanding of Love's deceptive nature, the priest imprudently allows himself to be lured into Love's trap. Finally, in the third and innermost sphere of the text, the experiences of the women in conversation with the archpriest's messenger are proof of Juan Ruiz's warning that appearances deceive. The content of the women's tales reinforces the warnings against deceit, and the context illustrates the subtle process of deception. Only the most prudent listener will avoid being deceived.

The author's ability to deceive the reader depends on the reader's knowledge of certain ideas which the society generally holds true, and on his knowledge of the social context in which these ideas function. It also depends on the reader's

understanding that although they are individually considered to be true, the ideas may contradict each other. Often these ideas are embodied in folktales. Fictional deceit through the use of folktales is effective because of the ancient relationship of tales to the acquisition and command of wisdom. Tales were commonly used to impart wisdom and aid in remembering guiding principles, as well as to provide proof of one's knowledge. Even so, the ideas conveyed by the tales may reflect the ambivalence of the society about different situations. Only the prudent reader will see all the possibilities and interpret them correctly.

Studies of popular tales as observable folklore contribute valuable information to the analysis of folklore in literature. The fact that we cannot observe medieval folklore does not necessarily prevent us from analyzing folklore of the medieval period (in its literary form) using guidelines which we use for the analysis of observable contemporary folklore. We know something of how folktales function in other cultures and in other periods through collections of stories in works like Sendebar and Conde Lucanor, contemporary to the Libro de buen amor. Evidence in these and other works indicates that story was widely perceived as a teaching device that could also be amusing, although the entertaining aspect of tales should not be allowed to get out of hand. Juan Ruiz certainly carried the use of story into the realm of entertainment. More importantly, he has shown it in another function outside both the realm of entertainment and didactic intent. He illustrates the function of story as a device for

communicating difficult ideas necessary for the resolution of a particular conflict.

Juan Ruiz deliberately plays on the inherent ambiguity of stories by not giving much guidance to the reader, and in fact jeopardizes their traditional validity by using them to illustrate points that are not in keeping with conventional values. In so doing, he enlarges on the meanings of story by suggesting new interpretations. By making them more pliable, and using stories as building blocks in the larger context of his work rather than as an end in themselves, he extends their value. He allows and even encourages the reader to deal with the ramifications of a tale on several levels. Application of the tales's wisdom is not always the prudent course of action, nor does it necessarily result in the expected and logical consequence. At first, Juan Ruiz seems to use story in the manner of Juan Manuel, that is, to present moral truths which will serve as guidelines to help maintain order. However, he illustrates through his characters that people do not always follow the rules, and even when they do, the rules do not always work. The use of folktales in the Libro de buen amor parallels the meanings and interpretations of the work itself. Stories do not always mean the same thing to all people.

There are significant relationships between the way that folktales function in a society and the way that the author of a literary work can use them within the work. Storytelling and the relationship of the tales to the text create for the reader a

perspective on the Libro de buen amor which is vital to its analysis, and Juan Ruiz's use of folktales cannot be ignored without jeopardizing our understanding of the entire work. Any literary interpretation implies a value judgment, for it is based on a given set of criteria by which the work is evaluated. The tendency is to attribute difficulties of analysis to a flaw in the artistic development of the work or the logic of its author, rather than to accept them as the author's manipulation of the function of various elements of the work. This is certainly true in the case of Juan Ruiz's use of folktales.

The key to this analysis is the function of the folktales in the Libro de buen amor. It is necessary to understand at the outset that there is not one meaning or interpretation that always holds true for each tale. Juan Ruiz is aware of this as he creates the storytelling context within the text. If we attempt to limit the reader's interpretation of the Libro de buen amor to one perspective or vantage point, we find ourselves locked into a labyrinth of contradictions. Although the work has a final literary form, the folktales which it incorporates elicit an ever-changing and reader-initiated response. They require the reader to participate actively in this literary event, and provide the potential for developing a more comprehensive interpretation of the whole. In a sense, the reader becomes a part of the creative process. As in a live storytelling situation the audience participates in the creation of the story, so the reader participates in the Libro de buen amor.

Stories are signs of cultural values and organization. For them to function effectively, they must have an interpretation which is generally known and accepted. We cannot assume that medieval societies were so naive, however, as to fail to see the duality of many of the tales, or the humor of a situation in which an inappropriate tale is used by the speaker. To the contrary, many factors suggest that at least one medieval audience of the Libro de buen amor was quite sophisticated. In his discussion of scholasticism and the audience of the Libro de buen amor, Lawrance states:

> Such passages require the complicity of a quick-witted and learned audience. I believe that Ruiz's original listeners were able to pick up instantly the themes and technicalities which I have had to expound in ponderous detail. We should beware the assumptions which befuddle us, perhaps unconsciously, when we talk of oral delivery and an illiterate audience.[4]

Juan Ruiz's use of folklore obliges us to step back from the work and view it with a different perspective. Like Dalí's "Disappearing Bust of Voltaire," the Libro de buen amor changes when we seek another vantage point. Both works reveal disturbing inconsistencies while creating the illusion of a certain integrity and harmony. Prudent observers will find that the content and the meaning remain slightly askew until they seek a new frame of reference through which to integrate them. A traditional approach to the Libro de buen amor deals primarily with the episodes in their own sphere of reference, in the same way that we initially view the painting with an eye for the figures that actually appear

on the canvas. There is meaning in these parts of the works, but the full implication of the artist's message only becomes evident when the viewer or reader becomes an active participant in the work. Each figure or episode has meaning in itself within the context of the work, but that meaning is not identical to the meaning of the whole. Only from the vantage point of participant can the reader or viewer perceive the relationship of the parts to the whole and comprehend the significance of the work. As a participant, the viewer sees the subject that is not painted, but outlined by the figures on the canvas; and the reader understands the meaning that is not stated, but exposed by the episodes of the book.

The ingenuity with which folktales are used in the Libro de buen amor indicates Juan Ruiz's understanding of how they function and his acute awareness of the persuasive power of popular tales. Precisely because they are associated with wisdom and because they can be interpreted various ways, a skillful storyteller can manipulate the folktales and their presentation to guide the audience to the desired response. The relationship of folktales to this text and the subtle manner in which Juan Ruiz uses the context of the tales reveal that the work does have a unity which extends beyond the content of either the tales or the fictional autobiography.

NOTES

1 Meléndez, p. 92.

2 Meléndez, p. 93.

3 Scordilis Brownlee, p. 72-74; Meléndez, pp. 90-91.

4 Lawrance, p. 237

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Major Field: Spanish

Title of Dissertation: Stories and Storytelling in the Libro de buen amor: Juan Ruiz's Use of Folktales to Admonish, Persuade and Deceive

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